



**PHD**

**Getting to know you- an integration conundrum**

**A boundary crossing change laboratory in a Home-School project in Switzerland**

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GETTING TO KNOW YOU – AN INTEGRATION CONUNDRUM:  
A BOUNDARY CROSSING CHANGE LABORATORY IN A  
HOME-SCHOOL PROJECT IN SWITZERLAND.

**Denise Shelley Newnham**

A thesis submitted for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

University of Bath. Department of Education

**September 2012**

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## DECLARATION

I declare that *Getting to know you - an integration conundrum: A boundary crossing change laboratory in a home-school project in Switzerland* is my own work, except where indicated, and that it has not been submitted before for any degree or any examination at any university.

Signed:

.....  
Denise Shelley Newnham

September 2012

## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am perceived as an immigrant in the research area of this thesis despite having Swiss nationality for the past 27 years. Through the pain of this exclusion I found new ways of being. I returned neither to my former national identity and neither to that of the present. Instead I left both, moving on to accept that I could never again be only South African (whatever that might mean, (Lithman, 2005)) and within the same reflection could never be Swiss, for now I am the aggregate of the multiple activities within which I took part and constructed (Leontiev, 1978), I am now ‘double voiced’(Bakhtin, 1986 ), a hybrid.

My preoccupation with immigrants’ well being has its roots in my experience of being a white South African within an apartheid regime. It is not only those that are excluded that suffer but also those that embody the acts of exclusion. In Switzerland my preoccupation with this topic was perceived as an aggression by my ex-husband and unfortunately he translated his feelings of frustrations with my being an immigrant woman into forms of verbal and physical violence. As the verbal and physical blows rained down on my body and soul, I felt my socio-psychological being wishing to escape to a place where things were safe and warm, but at such times my children and their well being entered my thoughts, overriding the rest.

No research topics are free of our social representations (Markova, 2005). We can only attempt to remain as close to what is called reality as is possible, and in the case of this thesis that is what I have attempted to do but I acknowledge that certain verbal emphases were chosen in order to transmit a definite message to you the reader.

Socially immigrants are not defined by nationality or immigrant status besides in some cases where there is a specific problem being discussed. However, in this thesis I have used the terms immigrants, foreigners, migrants and refugee mothers in the case of the Home-School project as these were the social terms used and national statuses of the mothers concerned, and these categorisations contained various implications of social mobility as indicated in chapter two page 56. I adopt the terms used by the participants when referring to the mothers in this thesis in order to maintain the feeling and portray the strength of exclusion that exists within the area and the need for change. We adopted the term “integration” within the Change

Laboratory sessions not to refer to a socio-political model for immigrant populations but rather as a general term that covers all processes.

Being an immigrant means not being in *the inside* and not fully ever being able to understand what it means to be there. I adopt the position that we human beings have the tools to empathise with the position of another but we cannot ever fully share the same perception as our historical experiences remain forever different. In the same way, never could a person not having experienced a civil war or an apartheid regime, a Tsunami, rape or repeated physical violence know what it is like to be there. A year ago when my best friend died of cancer I could only observe her pain from the outside, having never experienced such physical pain myself and was amazed at the medical staff who managed to speak of her experience of pain as though she was merely an object needing a higher level of morphine.

I do not pretend to have the answer to the whole truth of either ‘nationals’ or ‘immigrants’ experiences, for as I have stated above, all our experiences remain personally historical and as Bateson (1972) states, ‘(i)n as much no class can be a member of itself’(p.280) and furthermore in the world of theory, ‘when a train of propositions can be shown to generate a paradox, the entire structure of axioms, theorems, etc, involved in generating that paradox is thereby negated and reduced to nothing. It is as if it has never been. But in the real world (or at least in our descriptions of it), there is always time, and nothing which has been can ever be totally negated in this way.’(p. 281). I adopt the position that classification is not the person and people’s lives cannot be reduced to a mere hypothesis that can be negated. People’s lives are a process over time and that experience of time remains an intrinsic constituent of their individuality. I remain in constant awe of all human effort to transgress the impossible, those moments in life where life itself appears to have lost its sense and where new psycho-material tools need to be constructed in order to navigate back to life in its full real sense (Vasilyuk, 1992). I dedicate this work to all those women in our world that fight against all odds to raise their children to be well balanced and productive human beings.

**I owe the completion of this project to many people:**

Firstly I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Harry Daniels for his support, sharing his valuable knowledge and his constant guidance.

I would like to thank the University of Bath for the financial support granted at the beginning of this study.

My most sincere thanks go to my external (Dr. Paul Warmington) and internal examiners (Dr. Kyoko Murakami) for the new horizons that their questions opened to me. Your questions gave my work direction. I would as well like to thank Dr. Seth Chaiklin for helping me to feel secure in the continuity of this work.

Thank you Dr. Richard Deutch for reading my thesis work and offering your valuable suggestions.

My most sincere thanks go to Dr. Jaakko Virkkunen, a friend and colleague for over six years. Thank you Jaakko for all that you have taught me and shared with me. That which I have learned from you is irreplaceable and my time with you was truly a growing experience.

This study relied on the collaboration of around 30 people. I would like to thank the Home-School project holders, the project facilitators, the teachers, doctors, and social workers that assisted and participated in my thesis project. Most of all my most sincere thanks go to the mothers involved in the project, who shared their private lives with me as we burrowed a path to the light of a new way of experiencing our everyday existence.

Of course, my thesis would have never have materialised without the ongoing support of my four children: Mikhaël, Shelly, Taslina and Abigail. Over these past 6 years, my loves, we have fought for many things and despite all the pain and suffering that you were living, never once did you admonish me for pursuing my dreams. Thank you for all those times that you cooked, cleaned, ran errands or took care of each other when I could not. I appreciate that you always told me, despite my preoccupations, that I was a good mum and that you learned positively from my perseverance. The odds were high against us but you never let go and instead filled our home with laughter. My respect, love and admiration for all of you will remain forever. You are truly four great people and I am honored to know you and to be able share parts of our lives together. Without you I would have little purpose. You were my guiding light during those years of darkness and are my strength and my passion.

Mum, you are no longer on this earth but the memory of you remains. Thank you for all that you gave me.

My thanks go furthermore to my brother Roderick for all those great chats on Skype about management, leadership and children. To my sister Jacky for all her reassurance, and to Peter who has always been a father to me. Thank you all for your undying support and encouragement and for helping me to stand up again when the blows of life were falling hard and often, and when I had believed my dreams to be shattered.

Furthermore, I thank you Joseph for the guidance and support that you have given me.

Finally, my very warm thanks go to Claudette John and Mikhaël (my son) for teaching me to set up this thesis electronically.

## ABSTRACT

In Developmental Work Research and its Change Laboratory methodology, development is understood as being when a group of people collaboratively change their material object. This study argues that this understanding ignores personal zones of proximal development and personal history as a beginning, and functional concepts as an outcome. Perceiving the subject of an activity as a homogenous group, I claim, is tantamount to an assimilation model of integration. Integration models that aim at homogenization rely on abstract concepts of others and require retooling in order to be more empathetic and expansive. Switzerland in 1998 adopted an acculturation model of assimilation that was thought to be the only possible solution for the maintenance of national unity. The model has been referred to as a national capitalistic ‘steamroller’ based on homogenization and exclusion. Under this perspective, migrant and refugee parents are categorised by mainstream educators as desisting from their children’s formal education, and national parents represent the perfect model. The empirical work was carried out within a home-school project in a French-speaking canton in Switzerland. The project was designed by a group of special education teachers. The study explores the potential of Developmental Work Research and Change Laboratory methodology, as developed by Engeström (1987), to produce radical and sustained organisational change in a social context. Through the inclusion of an analysis of subject positioning, the findings show that Change Laboratory offers a solid background for retooling new concepts of immigrant people to one that is more empathetic and expansive. The conflicts that ensued within the Change Laboratory sessions opened a developmental zone in which the concepts of being a national or a foreigner were reconstructed. The study suggests ways of improving Change Laboratory methodology for better understanding of subject positioning.

Key words: Integration; home-school project; Cultural-Historical Activity Theory; Change Laboratory; levels of logic, intervention



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## INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I present the backdrop against which this thesis is set. The chapter begins with the introduction of the international and political methods of dealing with migrant populations after World War Two until present times. I then shift from an international context to how integration laws are translated at the national level and then at the local and everyday level. Switzerland's immigration history is presented and I include the international perceptions of the different approaches that Switzerland has adopted to deal with immigrant populations, the most criticised being those of migrant labourers and refugee populations. The following excerpt illustrates how difficult it is emotionally to survive in such a socio-political system as an immigrant:

*I live here...now...no babba, no mamma, no sisters, no brothers. I go back and forth and that is my day. I look at the wall and it looks back at me. Many women many, many (gesturing widely to outside her apartment) are hiding in the dark waiting for their children and husband to come home. Just yesterday she told me how she is afraid that (indicates banging on the front door) waiting just waiting. A 'B' permit is safe...just waiting...now... how many years (data excerpt: B231106) (See chapter 2 for definitions of residential status).*

The extract above is drawn from the ethnographic data that prepared the intervention research on which this study is based. A middle aged mother from Somalia, having lived in Switzerland for over 15 years as a refugee, testifies to her isolation. Switzerland's asylum acts maintain a national desire to keep migrants and refugees isolated from their kin in order to prevent the development of ethnic enclaves. My research focuses on a home-school project, which is identified from now on with capital letters 'Home-School', that intended to assimilate migrant and refugee mothers into the wider society in order to improve on the school performance of their children. Amongst the project participants' radical categorisations of and stereotypes toward the mothers and their children were the sources of increasing dissension reducing their overall productivity. Based on Cultural Historical Activity Theory and Change Laboratory methodology, the research attempts to facilitate the transformation of the Home-School project holders and the facilitators' categorisations of immigrant mothers and their children to one that is more healthy, expansive and inclusive for Swiss and immigrants alike.



Immigration remains a contemporary problem internationally and locally. A survey run by Gallup (downloaded, 02.01.2013) in 2012 indicates that there are 640 million adults in the world who would like to immigrate; this is about 10% of the world's population. "Immigrant" is a general term used to classify those people who are not born within their country of settlement but who wish to take up permanent residence. The International Organisation for Migrants (IOM) (downloaded, 20.10.2012) states that there are 214 million migrant people already in the world today which signifies that 1 out of every 33 persons is a migrant. A migrant is a person that does not settle permanently in one area but moves for different reasons from one geographical region to another. Within the category of migrants is the subcategory of asylum seekers, those who wish to acquire asylum within a host country, and refugees, those who have acquired asylum within a country. In order to acquire refugee status, these people have to prove under the 1951 United Nations Refugee convention that their physical or mental health was in danger in their previous country. The United Nations High Commission for refugees announced in 2012 that there are 43.7 million refugees in the world, 80 percent of which were women and children. The rising numbers of migrant and displaced people is a source of growing anxiety to nation states. A nation state cannot refuse to admit a refugee person but since the events of September 2001 governments have revisited their migration laws. In the case of asylum seekers, nation states have tended to increase restrictive procedures (The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for refugees, 2006) aggravating the positions of those already in their care. Nation states argue against their responsibility by pointing to a lack of resources, threats to national security, fears of domestic and political destabilisation, or the arrival of even greater numbers of refugees, however 'this is a violation of international law that is binding on all states' (downloaded 20.10.2012). The term immigrant shall be used from now on to designate all groups as this is largely the term used by Swiss nationals besides in situations when the residential status needs to be defined. The other term that is used is foreigner, '*les etrangers*' and this will be used when one of the participants or facilitators uses it to identify immigrant populations.

A careful study carried out by Opeskin (2009) indicates that international laws have the greatest impact on human global mobility. These laws contribute to the pull factors associated with the area of destination and the push factors associated with the area of origin. In addition Opeskin (2009) asserts that while international law frames all national laws, this framing creates an ongoing tension between the nation's obligation to exercise international law and its

need to maintain national sovereignty. Such tensions filter down into the socio-political climate of a population. For example, the Swiss population voted (28.11.2010) to expel all foreign criminals immediately and without trial. This measure is against the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and created further tension between the Swiss nation state and other nation states that have ratified international laws on refugees and migrant people. Furthermore, the results of the vote had been a cause of further exasperations between the foreigners and the native Swiss population (Le Temps, 29.11.2010, published in Geneva). This political motion was possible due to a loophole in the international laws that poorly differentiate short-term and long-term migratory movements. ‘Short-term migrant’ refers to a person who moves to another country for more than three months but less than one year, while a long-term migrant lives in another country for more than one year (United Nations Population Division 2002, p.11). However, the differences are often not mentioned in the demographic records of most nations. International laws concentrate on human rights for long-term migrants while neglecting short-term migrants. Such loopholes are not uncommon within international and national laws and allow for the abuse of human rights.

Moreover, there are several categories of laws concerning migrants and not all of them are legally binding to all nations. Treaties are based on the consent of states and their obligations are generally legally binding only in states that have expressed their consent to be bound by the treaty. Customary law binds all states including newly independent states that persistently objected to the rule during the process of its formation (Opeskin, 2009).

The above categories are supplemented by soft laws derived from resolutions, recommendations, declarations and accords of international organisations and conferences. While such statements are not legally binding, they are highly influential in guiding state practice and thus indicating the future direction of new norms of international law (Van Hoof, 1983). “Soft law has been a potent source of development of international migration law and policy (Martin, 2004) and has increasingly been the route through which multilateral, regional, sub-regional and bilateral arrangements have sought to address migration issues (IOM, 2003)” (Opeskin, 2009, p.3). Although soft law can be a precursor to compulsory treaty laws, most states have preferred to keep the differentiation between treaties, customary law and soft law, in particular in contentious areas such as migration (Alvarez, 2006; Betts, 2008) as by doing so they are exempt from adhering to the international consensus. The ambiguity of these

laws is accentuated by international institutions that are able to make use of these inconsistencies to blur the boundaries between human rights and national desires (Opeskin, 2009).

Two rights of particular relevance to migrants are the right to equality and the right to be free from discrimination on grounds that include race, national origin, or other status (ICCPR, Art 2, 26; ICESCR, Art 2). However, the position of migrants is more nuanced in practice because many rights and freedoms are subject to permissible limitations which allow migrants to be treated less favourably than nationals (Fitzpatrick, 2003). The article actually empowers states by giving them the right to control the flow of people across their borders. In addition, it facilitates the discrimination of treatment based on classes of migrants (Martin, 1989). Discrimination based on the origins of refugee populations, for example, took place during the Hungarian crisis of 1956, the influx of Algerians into Morocco and that of Chinese into Hong Kong (Gallagher, 1989). The UNHCR began to adopt new measures to deal with the changing profiles and numbers of refugees (Barnett, 2002) but these measures are to date always lagging behind a rapidly changing reality. The lack of adequate international response to a rapidly changing immigration climate world-wide is reiterated within wide variations in national immigration policies.

Lieger, Kohls and Krause (2012) maintain that Switzerland is one of the OECD countries with the highest level of immigrants; foreigners constitute 27% of the population. However, on the International Organisation for Migration website, Switzerland is 36th on the list of 49 European countries with a total of only 48,813 refugee people, that is 6.37 for 1000 residents (downloaded, 12.06.2012). Furthermore, Swiss integration laws are very restrictive and vary according to different national groups. On average a person has to have lived on Swiss territory for 12 years prior to being able to apply for nationalisation. If nationalisation was facilitated for children born on Swiss soil, as is the case in other European countries, the percentage of immigrants would drop by 5% and if nationalisation was possible after 10 years, which is the case in most other European countries, then the percentage would be reduced by half placing Switzerland's foreign population on a par with that of other European countries (Leanza, Ogay, Perregaux and Dasen, 2001). The situation of immigrants has not improved since the apparition of these publications.

In 2007 and 2008, Switzerland implemented a harshly criticised reform of the Asylum Act. A highly controversial part of the revision consisted of reducing any political activism by asylum seekers that was considered ‘abusive’. The Federal Council argues that asylum-seekers engage in exile politics only for the purpose of fabricating new reasons to be granted asylum. Such measures were said to be against the international law stipulated under the European convention of human rights and could only be undertaken if national security, territorial integrity or public safety were in danger, or to prevent disorder or crime. In the spring of 2008, Justice Minister Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf announced new measures to “reduce the attractiveness of Switzerland as a target country for asylum-seekers” (Smith, R. downloaded, 20.10.2010). This is despite statistics that do not justify such an effort, which therefore appears to be another example of xenophobia. The coordinator of Amnesty International stated (downloaded, 20.10.2010) that the annual numbers of asylum requests have remained constant over the past three years and have reduced considerably since the 1990s (10,000 in 2008, down from 40,000 in 2010).

Despite a reduced demand for Swiss Nationality since the introduction of the European ‘*libre passage*’ for workers, more restrictive measures have been recently imposed. Furthermore, integration programs have not evolved (Liebeg et al., 2012) and there are few positive integration measures for immigrant women such as having access to the full range of active labour market policy tools. Furthermore, the low income of humanitarian refugees is mostly due to a lack of standard integration programs. However, integration programs are the source of much debate among academic scholars and politicians alike (see Chapter 1 of this thesis). Switzerland’s immigration-integration history has been turbulent and colourful due to a push and pull factor, that is to say the need for low paid workers and a conflicting desire for national sovereignty.

A longitudinal quantitative study estimating the level of misanthropy and right-wing extremism in Switzerland (Cattacin, Gerber, Sardi and Wegener, 2006, p.14) revealed that: “(t)he opinions expressed on the role of migrants in Swiss society contrast with these xenophobic feelings. It seems like a fatality to feel on the one side that foreigners are a problem, but that they are at the same time extremely useful for the society” (see results below). Moreover, they declare that the results of the survey appeared ambiguous given that the results could not contrast xenophobia and integration as their survey could not differentiate

between xenophobic attitudes and the relevance of integration policies. On the one hand, it was stated by the survey population that there was a need for assimilation barriers to be introduced and, on the other hand, the metaphor of the 'boat is full' and 'send them back to where they came from' was used (p.14). Furthermore, ambiguities in the results were due to the differences between populations distributed within Switzerland's mountain regions, rural areas and those lacking tertiary education with those of the populations in the towns, having higher business and academic profiles as well as a tertiary education

Percentage of the population	Question
59%	agreed with the statement that Switzerland has arrived at its limits concerning its foreign population and that the number of foreigners in Switzerland cannot increase without creating problems for the society.
54%	of the population agreed with the statement that foreigner's abuse the welfare benefits.
43%	agreed with the statement that the high number of foreigners in schools is an obstacle to a good education for Swiss children.
41%	agreed with the statement that foreigners are responsible for the growing unemployment.
32%	agreed with the statement that foreigners do not respect the environment.
29%	agreed with the statement that foreigners are responsible for the insecurity in the streets.

Despite these ambiguities, other social studies indicate that generally in most parts of Switzerland the arrival of each new bank of migrant labourers and asylum seekers is met with reticence and renewed xenophobic tendencies. Dasen (2001) criticised a renowned sociologist at Zurich University, Hoffman-Novotny (1982), who wrote that the only way to circumvent

problems that new banks of foreigners exemplify is through the ideology of assimilation. This author claimed that new arrivals drain the economy as they are non-innovative and endanger the society by their presence. Hoffman-Novotny referred to non-compatible immigrants, as those that least resemble the local population. These he stated should be sent back to where they came from and only those that have something to give to the nation should be allowed to stay but on the condition that they assimilate rapidly. The document was published in 1982, however that of Cattacin et al. above was published in 2006 and the results of the survey reveal that the societal beliefs captured in the results of Hoffman-Novotny's survey are still held by the general Swiss society. During the first National Integration symposium held in 2005, the head of the Federal government's integration department and leader of the United Central Democratic party, Christoph Blocher, rendered immigrants within the meeting invisible as he welcomed all leaders of cantons and nationals but not the immigrants themselves. He then voiced his departments' desire to curtail immigrants' entry into Switzerland on the basis of academic achievement and race due to the rising number of non-compatible immigrant elements within the existing system (Newnham, 2006).

Right-wing political parties such as those of Christoph Blocher (Union Democratique du Centre) make use of xenophobic fears as mediating tools for their campaigns, for example, posters of four white rats and one black rat and the black rat was eating into a large piece of Swiss cheese. Similarly, there was another poster with five white hands and one black hand and the black hand was attempting to take a red Swiss passport out of a basket. The titles of these campaigns were 'no to nationalisation'. However, these campaigns do not take into account that Switzerland's immigration history testifies that the country has lived and continues to live a radical socio-economic conundrum in the form of the need for migrant labour and international diplomatic recognition against the fear of losing their national identity and resources (Leanza, Ogay, Perreux & Dasen, 2001; Dasen, 2001; Piguet, 2009). As foreigners and, in particular, refugee persons are kept largely isolated from the larger society through political laws, few Swiss people understand the intolerable situation within which refugees, asylum seekers and some migrants find themselves, as testified by a mother of three children from Sri Lanka:

*I did not know that my chairs were scraping on the floor and making a noise for the people downstairs. The next thing they were banging on the door shouting at us and then they went to*

*the Refugee centre and we received a letter telling us that they were going to expulse us. We were so scared we put the children in their bedrooms every day and closed their door as it was on the other side of the building. The children would cry as they did not want to stay in their bedrooms every day but we did not know what to do (silence) a few days later we understood that it was the chairs and so we put a carpet on the floor but we still have the problem of the children playing (data excerpt A171106 ).*

Another mother told me that:

*Every night we go to sleep with our suitcases ready, they come early in the morning between three and four when we are asleep. They are telling us that they will send me back to Ethiopia and my husband to Somalia as we married here. Our children will be separated (tears begin and she hides her face with her hands) our boy will go with the father and the two girls will come with me... we cannot sleep... my husband has very bad headaches all the time... it is my son and my husband (silence) we were married in a mosque in Geneva (data excerpt E251106).*

Switzerland's immigration can be historically categorised into several major periods which illustrate the guiding push and pull factors as well as the conundrum of needing cheap labour versus the desire to maintain national sovereignty:

- 1) 1948-1962: Immigrants and asylum seekers began to arrive after the Second World War. Switzerland closed its borders to Jewish populations. The country needed qualified labour and recruited Italian engineers to build water reservoirs and roads. Furthermore, Switzerland lacked qualified secretaries and cleaners and encouraged the entry of Austrian and German women labourers. However, Swiss nationals began to complain that foreigners were stealing their work. A new immigration policy was developed to contend with migrant workers: they could not obtain permanent residence and had to return to their countries of birth out of the labour season.
- 2) 1963-1973: Italian workers were encouraged to enter Switzerland in order to work on construction sites. These Italians felt exploited and claimed their workers' rights. Manifestations of xenophobia amongst Swiss nationals led to burning of Italian food

shops and restaurants. The government's fears of an immigration invasion led to the creation of an immigration quota. A second negotiation was undertaken with the Italian government to ensure the protection and human rights of Italian populations working in Switzerland.

- 3) 1974-1984: Petrol and economic crises once more led to Swiss nationals' fears being targeted toward foreigners in Switzerland and 300 000 foreigners were expelled. This led to an uprising of international accusations against Swiss laws for foreign workers.
- 4) 1985-1992: The second wave of immigrants, in the form of asylum seekers and migrant labourers arrived from ex-Yugoslavia and Portugal. This resulted in increased xenophobic and racist acts by neo-Nazi youth and other Swiss nationals.
- 5) 2000-2004: European and international accusations increased against Swiss immigration laws that were said to not respect international agreements. Furthermore, the United States of America accused Switzerland of hording money that belonged to victims of the Holocaust. A historical work group (2002) retaliated in the publication of a book entitled 'Swiss confronted with blackmailing' (my translation) stating that these accusations were based on lies and that the deformation of facts resulted in unjust threats of boycotts and sanctions on behalf of the United States of America. The Swiss feared isolation and sought to develop new immigration policies. The introduction and ratification of the '*three circles immigration policy*' linked asylum immigrants and economic immigrants. Three categories were created based on the immigrants' economic status and origin. Acceptance of the bilateral negotiations in 2000. The Swiss population felt aggressed, due to their obligation to comply with international pressure and expressed this through increasing and constant but controlled feelings of animosity towards foreigners.
- 6) 2000-2005: Swiss politicians renewed attempts to control their immigrant populations: foreigners have to learn one national language; are discouraged from living in ancestral national groups and from engaging in cross national marriages; increased restrictions are placed on asylum seekers leading to rapid and early expulsion; negotiations were undertaken with countries that had stabilised to accept re-entry of former persecuted persons with the guarantee of their security. Switzerland is criticised and accused of



having some of the most restrictive and inhuman integration policies (Piguet, 2009; Bolzman, 2001).

The integration policies are voted by the population and refined by the federations. Although everyone is not aware of international processes toward immigrants most people are aware of the tacit discomfort that having them in their country, and especially in small mountain regions such as this one, engender. A Swiss woman stated: *I watch them through my windows; they are sitting there on the porch in the sun drinking tea and not working. We have to work all the time to pay for them to do nothing. I felt as though I was suffocating, watching them every day (silence). I asked the mayor to send them to (name withheld).* (data excerpt SA151106).

Piguet (2009) and Bolzman (2001) revealed in their historical studies of immigration in Switzerland that in 2005, the year when I began to work on this study, the immigration laws in Switzerland were the most conservative both in Europe and internationally. International nation states increased their accusations against Switzerland's approach to dealing with immigrants.

In response to these accusations and international pressure, Switzerland decided that problems linked to the incorporation of foreign citizens in Switzerland should be dealt with at the level of the 26 Swiss Cantons. Due to this new measure several projects were proposed by different social institutions. One of these projects is the focus of this thesis. This project shall be referred to simply as the Home-School project in order to protect the participants as it is a small community and people are easily traced.

Six special education teachers and four members of an integration organisation designed the project to deal with the growing tensions within a teaching body that was dealing with migrant and refugee children. The teaching body argued that they were incapable of teaching children with such diverse problems and that they could neither perform in school nor behave appropriately. The special education teachers postulated that migrant and refugee children were problematic for teachers due to their parents' low investment in schooling activity. This perception is held by some noted scientists who work in the field of immigration and immigration insertion into Swiss society. Piguet (2009), for example, wrote that "the level of

immigrants' education remains inferior to that of Swiss nationals (37.8% having obtained a primary school diploma or less)" and furthermore that "(t) he explanation is to be found in their parents' low educational achievements" (p.97) (my translation). Piguet appears to have missed the works of Social and Educational Science Swiss scholars such as Pierre Dasen (1988, 1991, 2001), Christian Perregaux (1991, 1998b, 2001) Tania Ogay (2001) and Novine Berthoud-Aghili (2001, 2002) who argue that it is rather the system that is problematic and not the immigrants themselves and that the school arena should be a place where the concepts of national and social should be developed to contain multiple perspectives. This argument is sustained in the works of scholars such as Berry (1990, 1997, 2005, and 2012), Phinney (1990, 2005) and Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind and Vedder (2001), (see chapter 1 for elaborations).

Berry (2005) claims that the acculturation model adopted by a nation state has a great deal to do with immigrants' well being and social performance. He wrote that until recently it was believed that immigrants exhibited poorer psychological and social well-being but that the results of a study carried out in Canada revealed that immigrant youth are generally doing well and in some cases better than their peers, and that positive outcomes are best for those that identify with, and feel attached to both their heritage culture and to their new society. Moreover, he suggests that political policies should elaborate upon programs that accept diversity and unity (see Cole, 1998).

This chapter has dealt with the background to the political conditions within which this study was carried out. In other words, this section exposed how international laws that deal with immigrant populations are translated at a national and social level in ways that are not always conducive to healthy and positive relations between immigrants and nationals. I will argue in the following chapter that certain integration models create and maintain dissension between immigrant and national populations and that new models that are devised only too often contain the errors of their predecessors. Following this framework I argue that a historically induced socio-political dynamic that feeds on xenophobic fears needs '*retooling*' the situation in order to break the vicious circle installed between national and immigrant populations.

Presented in chapter 1 is my theoretical framework. I begin with a short discussion on the construction of human categorisation, both as a necessary human behaviour and as a destructive and limited way of conceptualising others. This discussion then enters into a

debate on which forms of integration models have been and are still considered to generate the best outcome for both national and immigrant populations. Relying on these models I pursue theories that discuss how immigrant populations reconstruct their conceptions of self and the social world. In section 1.4, I take a look at how definitions of nation states, cultures and human development are interconnected. The discussion leads on to the next section in which the different interpretations mentioned above are reiterated in the context of the school arena. Within this section I discuss different home-school projects that have been put into place internationally and illustrate the problem with the use of a case study of a home-school problem in Switzerland.

Chapter 2 presents the general background to the Home-School project exemplified by the laws contained in the national and cantonal legislative policies for immigrant populations. The Home-School project is then presented with a short discussion of the project holder's theoretical position. In Section 2.1.2 my participation in the project and my researcher-interventionist role is described. I then discuss the reason for carrying out my research within the Home-School project presented earlier. The next section briefly introduces the research participants as these are once more introduced within chapter 3 where I am able to make use of Developmental Work Research terminology. The chapter ends with my two research questions.

The third chapter is used to debate which types of research are best suited to answer my research questions and why the approach chosen was deemed to be appropriate. I then discuss Developmental Work research and argue for alternative readings of the basic tenants on which this methodology resides. This argument is necessary as it is the source of my second research question. The conceptual tools of the intervention Change Laboratory method are introduced and several criticism levered against this methodology by scholars in the field are presented. The following section includes a discussion of the ethical implications in conducting intervention research and how these were overcome; the position of this with regards to the University of Bath is discussed. This discussion then moves to a description of the actual Home-School Change Laboratory. I present both the research participants in theoretical terms and the unit of analysis. I then proceed to answer the questions of validity, reliability, transferability and generalisability. The actual proceedings of the Home-School Change Laboratory of this thesis are then discussed through the use of chosen extracts taken from the

consecutive sessions of the Learning activity and the Production activity. The extracts were chosen from substantial amounts of data in order to enable an analysis that could provide evidence for my two research questions presented in Chapter 2.

Chapter 4 is my analysis and makes use of mixed methods, both qualitative and quantitative discourse analysis. The discourse analysis is directly linked to the data that arises out of the Change Laboratory sessions and the participants work to overcome their contradictions. I therefore present an analysis of discursive actions (Engeström & Saanino, 2010) as being the manifestation of the different contradictions that emerge as the participants question, analyze, remodel and implement their new design. This analysis then continues to identify the occurrences of resolutions of the discursive actions: double bind, critical conflict, conflict and dilemma. The next analysis is based on the distinctions made by Tolman (1981) between metaphysics of properties, metaphysics of relationships, and dialectical thinking as well as that of Olson's (1999; 2003) distinction of an outsider's view. These distinctions are linked to Bateson's (1972) 4 levels of logic in order to track the participants' conceptual transformations. They were used as four bench markers devised to measure the participants shift from abstract to more inclusive and empathetic forms of thinking. The bench markers are: 1) focus on mothers and their children's properties representing *level 0* of Bateson's logic; 2) focus on relationships between factors, representing learning *level 1*; 3) focus on the overall external situation of the immigrant mothers and their children which represents learning *level 2*; and 4) focus on immigrant mothers and their children's experiences and intentions, which represents a form of dialectical thinking and learning *level 3*. Once a general statistical analysis of discursive actions, their resolutions and the four bench markers were completed, I carried out an analysis of discursive actions and resolutions of four project holder participants and benchmarked these in order to enable an analysis of subject positioning. The analysis is illustrated in a diagram and a discussion of this follows.

Chapter 5 begins with a discussion on experiencing, sense, meaning, learning and development. These concepts are then used to support a claim that political models of integration function as strong socio-cultural conceptual tools. This claim illustrates how the categorizations that ensue from these policies are experienced by those that carry the label. It is then discussed whether this label is necessary using the works of Du Bois (1919) and Bakhtin (1981). Following on from this discussion and relying on the analysis presented in

chapter 4, the discussion turns to illustrate how Bateson's (1972) levels of logic are typified within different types of integration models. A need for a different analysis of the data that arises out of Change Laboratory sessions is then debated, that is to say a claim is made to put semiotics back into the Cultural Historical Activity Theory which then affords an analysis of subject position. A discussion on subject position follows using one of the participants as an example. A new expansive model is proposed that includes concepts as an outcome as well as individual-collective processes of development. Furthermore, the outcomes and future challenges of the research carried out for this study are discussed and a brief articulation of the differences in voluntary organizations as opposed to money based organizations is offered as well as my position as an insider-outsider and an intervention-researcher. The chapter concludes with the limits of the study and final word.

## CHAPTER 1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter begins with a discussion of the view that categorizations are necessary to human functioning, a way of making sense of our world. Categorisations are a concept and a tool which afford the possibility of expanding and restraining thought. Politicians categorise human populations within their nation states for economic and social reasons. The categorisations become part of the societies perceptions, mostly accepted without questioning. The chapter continues with a summary of various concepts constructed to deal with immigrant populations. Relying on the works of noted scholars, I then argue that most of these concepts are fraught with ambiguities and contradictions due to diverse interpretations and forms of implementation. In the discussion that follows I unravel this conundrum, differentiating between ideological perspectives of *us and other* and acculturation models used to define immigrants social mobility.

Following on from this discussion I articulate the different possibilities developed by nation states to deal with immigrant populations and demonstrate how these models contain various levels of inclusion and exclusion that impact on national and immigrant population's psycho-social well being.

Leading on from this is a discussion on immigrants' reconstruction of self, of national identity and of hybrid forms of existing. This topic is unfortunately overlooked by many national immigration programs.

I then present the interpretation of culture and how culture is related to human development and national identity. I argue that the concept of culture can be used as a political tool to justify racist behaviour.

The chapter ends with the introduction of concepts that deal with schools and immigrant populations. Social relations that are translated through cultural categorisations inevitably have an impact within the school arena and parts of the response to these translations are the development of various home-school projects internationally.

## 1.1 Categorisations

“Categorisation is fundamental to human existence. It penetrates every context of collective social action and individual reasoning. We simply cannot describe, reflect on, or deal with reality without invoking categories and, thus indirectly, systems and traditions of categorisation by means of which we render events and objects intelligible” (Säljö and Hjörne, p.153). In other words, they are essential in the *doing* of social life (Wertch, 1991, 1998). The concepts of *us and other*, although eminently complicated, are constructed on the belief that we as human beings are something more than our bodies. “We might say that selves are persons and that persons are living human beings, where a living human being is an animal that has a certain characteristic mode of activity, one that involves coming to a life in the space of reasons” (Bakhurst, 2011, p.67) and if taken as truth then education is a vital “constituent of the vision itself, in virtue of the role it plays in the acquisition of the second nature essential to our community with the world and with other minded beings” (p.66) as it is “through others that we become ourselves” (Vygotsky, 1997, p.105) and through the destruction of others that we destroy ourselves.

How people identified reality can be traced, in part, back to the works of Baruch Spinoza, states Kahneman (2012). The initial socio-cognitive function is to believe that an affirmation is true prior to being able to believe that it is not true. Believing that it is not true requires more associative memory work (Kahneman, 2012). The former type of thinking is referred to as abstract thinking, and using Hegel’s example, is the act of seeing nothing in a murderer except the abstract fact that he is a murderer and to annul all other human essence in him with this simple quality (Kaufmann, 1997). Hegel extended his reflection stating that, should women, for example, add that the murderer is a strong, handsome and interesting man; they would have been admonished by their society as having corrupted morals (Williams, 1997). Besides being a collective societal enterprise, this form of abstract thinking involves taking one isolated observable event or feature and interpreting “a complex integral object as its homogenous instantiation” (Virkkunen, Newnham, Nleya & Engeström, 2012, p.3 ). In the case presented by this thesis, refugee mothers were perceived as people for whom the tax payers’ money is used and not as being a loving caring mother that has lost her family network, friends, economic situation, home and society. Abstract thinking is based on empirical generalisations and colour peoples’ intentions, thoughts and acts (Virkkunen et al.,

2012). Things out there in the world become stripped of their complexity and are internalised as such. In other words empirical, classificatory abstractions stabilise knowledge thereby freezing and simplifying the constantly shifting and otherwise bewildering reality of human existence. Such abstractions, however, fence reality off from thinking providing only the fixed and stabilised concept in the consciousness instead of advancing more elaborated reflections on the identified object (Ilyenkov, 1977). In the process of learning, the reproduction of stereotypes or categorisations demonstrates *zero learning* (Bateson, 1972, p.282). By overlooking the cultural nature of cognition, researchers and laypersons make “assertions about the nature of cognitive processes that... cannot, in general [be] observed directly. So we make inferences on the basis of indirect evidence instead, and attribute to intelligent systems a set of structures and processes that could have produced the observed evidence” (Hutchins, 1995, p.355) without verification. Moreover, Olson (1999) argues that attempts to explain behaviour through traits represents an *outsider's game* that directs attention away from the most important determinants of human nature: what a person thinks, wants and attempts to do. In other words, abstract thinking enables stereotyped forms of thinking which mask real human qualities. An opposite form of thinking would be, in Hegel's example, to contrast the initial form with an opposing possibility where the criminal is rendered as more than a crime existent. The murderer is recognised as a rational human being, a free and responsible human being. Without such recognition he is regarded with retribution, simply as a harmful animal that needs to be rendered harmless (Williams, 1997).

Drawing on the works of Hegel and Marx, Engeström (2007b) suggests that knowledge and concepts should be characterised on the basis of their uses. Forms of integration depend on categorisations of human differences explained on the basis of race, ethnicity, cultures and more, several of which have been established as a solution to the former. Lentin (2004) maintains however, that all remain boundary concepts and are simple reifications of human collectives and, as Bauman (2008) states, a consequence of modernity. “Categories referring to race, ethnicity or gender have passed unnoticed as indicative of a natural state of affairs in the past, but later they emerged as cultural constructions contingent on a certain social order and/ or world view. And as such they can be contested” (Säljö and Hjärne, 2009, p.153). In order to maintain a category there needs to be an alter-category and the process of dismantling a category requires recognition of the former construction of that alter-category.



Engeström (2007b) refers to the opposite of stabilised knowledge, *possibility knowledge*. Possibility knowledge emerges when objects are represented in fields with the help of which one can depict meanings in movement and transformation. Possibility knowledge is based on and supports dialectical thinking, that is to say, the analysis of real functional relationships of interaction between objects and phenomena in their historical development: “the concatenation and interaction of all aspects and moments of the object studied” (Ilyenkov, 1982, pp.32–33) and “the manner in which individual phenomena complement one another organically” (Falmagne, 1995, p. 208). Moreover, Davydov (1999) maintains that possibility knowledge or expansive knowledge is stimulated by the desire to experiment on finding out such relationships (Virkkunen et al. 2012).

Abstract constructions are not uniquely an individual property but formerly collective. Nation states draw boundaries of who is in the national circle, who is only partially in or who is completely out based on different forms of categorisations. The boundaries are maintained by apprehended integration/acculturation models that are socio-political tools (Wertch, 1985, 1991) that contain stronger or weaker forms of categorisations.

## **1.2 Ways of categorising, a political game: politics and concepts linked to integration**

Despite a concerted international effort to address the dilemma presented by World War Two’s refugee populations, Kymlicka (2012) asserts that “(i)deas about the legal and political accommodation of ethnic diversity has been in a state of flux around the world for the past 40 years” (Kymlicka, 2012, p.2). Politicians and academics alike move from one acculturation concept or model to another, only to find out that the new model is not so different from the former. In response to the concept of race being problematic (Cole, 1998) a new ideology grew, that of multiculturalism, and remained the leading model for the past 30 years (Duncan, 2005). Multiculturalism entered into the state discourse within the fields of immigration and ethnic affairs as a preferred alternative to multi-racism. Sadly, the subject of multiculturalism remains analytically confused, contested and culturally entangled. Multicultural approaches to immigrant populations took a hard hit after the destruction of the World Trade Centre in 2001. A rather confused attempt to reinstall coherence appears to be failing as it takes on a form of a “conceptual grab bag” with “elastic boundaries” and “a corresponding dilution of content” (Mills 2007, p.89), in which political and social fears and hopes are projected. Multiculturalism has been stretched to cover topics of internal and cultural political discourses

and strategies, sexual practices, education and curriculum building, social gatherings and even restaurants and menus. Confusion around the meaning and application of this concept attests to a general international lack of understanding of the challenges with which an immigrant person is confronted on a daily basis. Certain national multicultural perspectives were developed so as to guarantee elements of cultural autonomy as a trade-off for specific allegiance to the core values of the state and society (Jakubowicz et al. 1984; Kymlicka, 2012). Despite some nation states having positive experiences with the model of multiculturalism (See Berry 2012; Kymlicka, 2012) many countries in the West are now encountering serious integration dilemmas and are returning to harder and more defined policies (Duncan, 2005). Perhaps this return can be explained by Lentin (2004) who proclaims that problems of antagonistic acts based on race are not reducing but have just taken on a more subtle form hiding their historical socio-political construction in an entanglement of race and state. Multiculturalism then was satisfying as an ideology for politicians to save face but in practice did not alleviate the tensions between mainstream and minority groups residing in a nation state.

Flecha (2009) confirms Lentin's allegations and distinguishes between two forms of racism, an older modern racism and a post modern racism. The former is based on the existence of superior and inferior cultural or ethnic groups whereas the later is based on a more subtle form, which simply identifies cultural differences but does not equate them as superior or inferior. Whether subtle or overt, racism appears to still be present in our socio-cultural categorisations. Warmington (2009), for example, makes an appeal for recognition of the fact that a "post-racial (or colour-blind) situation has not been achieved" (p.283) despite the world asserting that racism is dead. Britain has a history of national and colonial racist attitudes which escalated after World War Two and led to a significant shift in black cultural politics (Hall, 2005) where *black experience* became a "singular unifying framework based on the building up of identity across ethnic and cultural differences between different communities" (p.441). It appears that under such circumstances it is easier for a population to be aware of the challenges that racism and its acts impose. However, relying on Warmington's allegation, this does not appear to be the case.

What then can be said of a nation state that does not have a perceived history of radical cultural differences and despite this, abuses the concept of colour as a generic symbol for all

immigrants? Such is the case in Switzerland where right-wing political propaganda actually exploits Swiss nationals' xenophobic fears in their use of the colours black, white and red. The red represents the Swiss nationality - the passport; the white - the Swiss nationals and the black - the foreigners. In the political posters, the colour black emits a message of *those that are not us* and of good and evil. Black is evil, dark and unknown. Ironically Switzerland, unlike Britain, does not have an immigration or colonial history of *blackness* (see introduction to this thesis), however this does not deter certain political parties from exploiting the colour black as a generalised symbol representing all foreigners. This is undeniably an act of racism, whether biological or cultural (Cole, 1996, 1998), and attests to Lentin and Warmington's claim that the world has simply adopted another form of racism and multiculturalism as an ideology which is simply a wolf in sheep's clothing (see Kundnani, 2012 for a list of recent events of racial acts in Europe). According to Cole (1998), racism should be redefined as including both "seemingly positive characteristics and biological and cultural racism. Racism is a process, which can be intentional or unintentional, whereby social relations between people are structured by the significance of human biological and/ or cultural characteristics in such a way as to define and construct differentiated social groups. Such groups are assumed to have a natural, unchanging origin and status. They are seen as inherently different and as causing negative consequences for other groups and/ or as possessing certain evaluated characteristics. Since these evaluated characteristics are stereotypes, they are likely to be distorted and misleading. If they are at first seemingly positive rather than negative, they are likely to be ultimately negative" (see Cole, 1996, 1997b). The act of exclusion, of categorising human groups as race, culture, black or white in order to enhance economic and national power is negative as we have much to learn from things learned by others. In a weak defence against international accusations of racism, Swiss right-wing political parties argue that they are stabilising left-wing 'anything goes' policies to immigrants rights in order to protect the *good immigrants* (L'Hebdo, June, 2006).

Kundnani's (2012, p.37) article demonstrates that other European countries' multicultural ideologies are as well being contested as they allow racist acts to be committed. "(T)he worst terrorist attack in Europe since the Madrid bombings of 2004 – a car bomb in Oslo, followed by a shooting spree on the island of Utøya, leaving 77 dead – had been carried out in the name of a 'counter-jihadist' rather than jihadist ideology. Anders Behring Breivik, whose 1,500-page manifesto, 2083 – *A European Declaration of Independence*,

was published online on the day of the attacks, believed that European elites were pandering to multiculturalism and enabling an ‘Islamic colonisation of Europe’.” Kymlicka (2012, p.7) confirms the fall of multiculturalism stating that, “(s)ince the mid-1990s... we have seen a backlash and retreat from multiculturalism, and a reassertion of ideas of nation building, common values and identity, and unitary citizenship — even a call for the ‘return of assimilation’.” He argues however, that multiculturalism has been misunderstood and that despite growing agreement on post-multiculturalism the agreement resides on a non-identified ideology and structure. He adds that the four misconceived principles of multiculturalism are that multiculturalism reinforces human diversity as consisting of clothing, cooking and music or as the three s’s “sahari, samoosas and steel drums” (p.8). In so doing it ignores the economic and political inequality and the real issues of immigrant and minority populations’ everyday dilemmas such as unemployment, poor educational outcomes, residential segregation, and political marginalisation. The acts of socially promoting and enjoying safe aspects of other people’s customs such as cooking, music and dress run the risk of petrifying cultures and societies thereby ignoring the reality of cultural practices as continually evolving and mixing. Moreover, there is a further danger of neglecting the promotion of emerging cultural commonalities by reinforcing the perceptions of minorities as eternally *other*. The conclusion of this discussion is that multiculturalism perceived and executed in this manner strengthens prejudices and stereotyping, and more generally, the polarisation of ethnic relations.

Despite all these above arguments, Cole (1998), Berry (2012) and Parekh (2000) maintain that it is not the concept of multiculturalism that is erroneous but the definition of its use. Parekh (2000) purports that a multicultural society includes not only two or more cultural communities, but also two definitions of each, which can in turn take several forms: “It might welcome and cherish it, make it central to its self-understanding, and respect the cultural demands of its constituent communities; or it might seek to assimilate these communities into its mainstream culture either wholly or substantially” (p.6). In the first case it is multiculturalist and in the second monoculturalist in its orientation and ethos. Parekh (2000) is using multiculturalism as a term to depict a society composed of people originating from different areas of the world and secondly as two different driving ideologies. In his words both are multicultural societies, but only one of them is multiculturalist. Monoculturalism in this sense then can be translated into a political agenda of assimilation (Berry, 2012) and the

society that ensues can no longer be defined as being a multicultural society that cherishes human diversity.

A true multicultural society, argues Cole (1998), retains a true multicultural concept of human diversity as a free choice which despite comprising certain properties that are emergent, such as music, clothing and food, still requires deeper values to be conveyed educationally. In a society that practices multiculturalism there are no social stratifications based on colour, culture or nationalism but rather different cultures and interpretations of cultural mixtures are represented at all levels of its social institutions, so for example, teachers should represent a multicultural community. Mainstream diversity education focuses on differences, states Cole (1998), but a true multicultural society and education focuses on human similarities, for example, perceiving that mothers all over the world generally care for their children and do whatever they understand as being best for them. Furthermore, he argues that there are two forms of racism. The first is intentional such as those carried out by the political party mentioned above and the second is unintentional. In the latter form people are unaware of the implications of their actions and beliefs which are problematic if the consequences of their actions engender dissension between the mainstream and immigrant populations, they simply transport inherited knowledge. A healthy multicultural society does not fear that minority groups will take over the mainstream populations' socio-economic-political world. In conclusion, Cole (1998) believes that multiculturalism should be transmitted through an education that demonstrates commonalities instead of differences by instructors' representative of a multicultural society.

I was curious to see just how many multicultural societies believe to have acquired such a state and found a revue entitled 'Canadian Diversity: Multicultural futures? International Approaches to Pluralism' (2005). The first chapter began with "once upon a time, the Dutch republic had been rightly famous ... for its advanced regime of toleration" (p.9). "Now the government of the Netherlands...is a forerunner of restrictive immigration policies in all dimensions: applicants for *asylum* (strict implementation of Dublin agreements, making air carriers responsible for rigged documents, 'short' procedures, abolishing rights of appeal by rejected asylum seekers, expelling 'non-expellable' asylum – seekers from retention – centres); *family–reunification* (higher age requirements for spouses, 21) and required income – guarantees (120% of minimum wage)...denying education and medical assistance to kids and

policies for zero labour-immigration combined with a new guest-worker regime for highly skilled professionals”(p.9). Multiculturalism in the Netherlands has been “relegated to the dunghill of political history” asserts Doornik (2005, p.32).

It sadly appears that the Netherlands is not alone in taking a swing back to more conservative integration policies; Denmark is also showing growing reticence to policies of multiculturalism (Bird, 2005, p.39). There are two sources of hostility towards immigrants: the first is the desire to protect Danish nationalism from globalisation and immigration. The second is Danish liberalism as the Danes consider themselves to be modern and progressive respecting “sexuality, marriage and women’s rights”. They perceive immigrants as stressing “dependency, obedience, and lack of individual choice, particularly in young women” (p.41). Migrants, and especially Muslims, are perceived as a threat to Danish nationalism and to the “sanctity of personal freedom” (p.41). Nonetheless, immigrants in Denmark are encouraged to vote after 3 years of residence. With the exception of five French speaking cantons, immigrants in Switzerland are generally not allowed to vote until they hold Swiss nationality, therefore refugee populations and any immigrants that cannot afford to purchase their nationality can never vote. Switzerland has never engaged with a multicultural integration perspective as they adopted an assimilation model from the outset (see above) and appear contradictory with the political integration models put into place.

These countries are not isolated in their perceptions of the dilemmas caused by human displacement. Norway is just another European nation state caught in an immigration contradiction (Lithman, 2005, p.53). Globally generated issues such as inequality, violence, and despair are supposed to be resolved locally, at the level of a nation state, and seldom are the nation states responsible for the root cause of these acts. Norway finds itself as a nation split over contentious discussions as to the rights of refugee populations. There are those “wishing to protect the national (whatever that is) and those arguing for a wider solidarity with people in distress” (p.53). “Non-western immigrants are frequently claimed to be a threat against the extensive welfare apparatus, and a common notion is that people illicitly claim refugee status. Norway and its welfare state, it is claimed, also has to counter ‘social dumping’ as a result of an unregulated influx of immigrants from the EU countries (especially, of course, those in recently added eastern Europe)” (p.53). Norway is seen by Norwegians as being a “singularity, uniquely characterised by cultural, social, political and economic distinctions. Its’

uniqueness, however, is seen not just as the inter-weaving of these distinctions, but as a totality which cannot be adequately reduced to language, analysis or scholarship” (p.53) it is a way of being Norwegian and results in a strong distinction of those considered to be Norwegian and those that are not. Under this national umbrella Norway struggles to define an integration model. Multiculturalism in Norway is defined as recognition of cultural separation. Many immigrants “see this as a present day onslaught on their existence in cultural terms” (p. 53). As a cultural being, the immigrant is unable to adhere to being in alliance with Norwegian cultural ways, as the different cultures are perceived as being distinct entities. Nevertheless, the report still argues that there are problematic differences with immigrants, stating that “immigrant children, including the second generation, do not do as well as national children and that immigrants from non-European countries are three to five times more unemployed” (p. 55).

Are countries outside Europe having more success? Australia in 1995 proclaimed having the world’s best practices on multiculturalism (Jakubowicz, 2005) but a decade later, in 2004, did not even mention multiculturalism. Was the former assertion of multicultural practices only a “rubric to disguise the buying of ethnic votes” (p.15): This later expression of multiculturalism finds its roots in Britain’s need to create an empire out of Australia and in order to do so outlined three imperatives: exclusion of other empires, subordination of indigenous peoples, and the normalisation of immigrants. These imperatives inter-connected throughout the society in a “creative” yet “unstable set of social, economic and political relationships” (p.15) to produce the multicultural society of today. However, multiculturalism as a social policy has declined in favour of a more systematic recognition of its three imperatives and a more “cautious, conservative and controlling orientation to cultural difference” (p.18). The result is a growing “inter-group hostility, higher levels of social tension and disadvantage, and a reduced willingness to interact across cultural boundaries for fear of rejection” (p.18) which, the empire handles through “ideological reframing and increasing control of dissidence and deviance”(p.18). Another problem raised against multiculturalism as a policy is that certain forms adopted by nation states in order to contend with rising numbers of immigrants’ conflict with indigenous minority populations. As for the Aboriginals in Australia, the Maori of New Zealand feel that multiculturalism as an integration policy would enable “the state to escape its public responsibilities leaving cultural maintenance with the community” (Spoonley, 2005, p. 21). So are Berry (2012) and Kymlicka (2012) incorrect in their research findings on

multiculturalism in Canada and is this due a different interpretation of the concept, as argued by Cole above?

In 2001, 18% of Canadians were born outside the country. The country is composed of 200 different ethnic origins. In discussion of racial differences the term *visible minorities* is used and features officially in the Employment Equity Act of 1995 defining 13% of the Canadian population in 2005 (Biles, Tolley & Ibrahim, 2005). “Newcomers are expected to adapt to Canadian norms and the Canadian society and its institutions are expected to adapt to a diversifying population” (p.23). The *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* (1988) commits the Canadian government to “support the full participation of all Canadians regardless of race, national or ethnic origin, colour or religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society political and economic facets” (p.23). This policy is referred to as “the ‘two-way street’ approach to integrating immigrants and refugees in Canada” (p.23). However, this liberal point of view was not always the case as in 1946, 46% of the Canadian population voted against the entry of Jewish populations into Canada. Furthermore, some Canadians perceive immigrants as not adhering to national values and as importing “illiberal practices and ideas that threaten Canadian society” (p.25). People with these perceptions wish to enforce laws where immigrants have to adhere to “Canadian values and renounce cultural practices such as forced marriages, female genital mutilation and dog eating” (p.25). “The discourse presumes that there is some existing set of Canadian values and some finite limits to which Canadians... adhere” (p.25). This perspective goes against the “two-way street approach” that counteracted an approach based on assimilation for a “negotiated integration” (p.25). However, politicians and citizens alike find it increasingly difficult to deal with complex and intersecting identities created by intermarriage across ethnic, racial, religious and linguistic lines but the willingness to “examine, refine and ensure” an approach that continues to be “open to diversity, and permitting the renegotiation and reconciliation of differences” (p.27) that is the heart of the Canadian model of integration continues. It appears then, that Cole (1998), Berry (2012) and Kymlicka (2012) have a point when they articulate that Multiculturalism as an integration model can be positive depending on its definition and application. However, the question that remains is whether a term or practice is necessary?

While I found these articles very informative they do not contain a consideration of the psychosocial effects of the different integration models on immigrants. Lentin (2004), in a



historical analysis of the term racism, in which strong binary opposites are contained, and multiculturalism, in which binary opposites are supposedly reduced, proclaims that it is not enough to embrace a concept without knowing where the concept comes from and what its construction is supposed to change in the lives of those that are powerless. Rethinking multiculturalism must not mean an acceptance of the new assimilationism that, as Kundnani (2012) rightly points out, seeks to impose the symbols of patriotic allegiance on populations for whom, happily, the need for a strong nationalist identity has been progressively eroded. It should rather signal the necessity of challenging classifications that would not have been chosen by those they aim to describe. This may pave the path towards questioning the way in which notions of identity and belonging are conceived, by whom they are developed and for what purpose: not only in theory but in political practice. Categorisations of human diversity are part of our socio-political reality and have consequences for those that are bearers of the title.

In 1992, the Swiss government claimed that assimilation was the only coherent integration model possible for the Swiss nation. This assumption relied on the works of a sociologist, Hoffman-Nowotny (Dasen, 2001, p.187). Within assimilation models of integration, immigrants are supposed to become economically, socio-culturally and politically absorbed into the new nation. They are expected to shed their old cultural and political loyalties (Guarnizo, Portes & Haller, 2003). The adoption of a model of assimilation as being the only one possible, claimed Dasen (2001) ironically ignored the results of a national survey run by Berry (1991) on the effects of multicultural policies and practices on nationals and immigrants in Canada. However, politicians that adopt models of assimilation proclaim that the outcome is one of acculturation. Acculturation is therefore not a model in this case but a social outcome. Berry (1991) added that integration or acculturation is a harmonious free will state of wellbeing between immigrant populations and nationals. In this sense the concept is problematic as it suggests a finite state that is reached by immigrants and nationals somewhat similar to absolution at the end of a religious pilgrimage (this point will be discussed later) and therefore ignores the construction of the concept of immigrant-national as being a bi-directional continually negotiated process. Despite these criticisms his work was a path breaker in the field of immigration and the psychosocial effects that integration models have on immigrant populations.

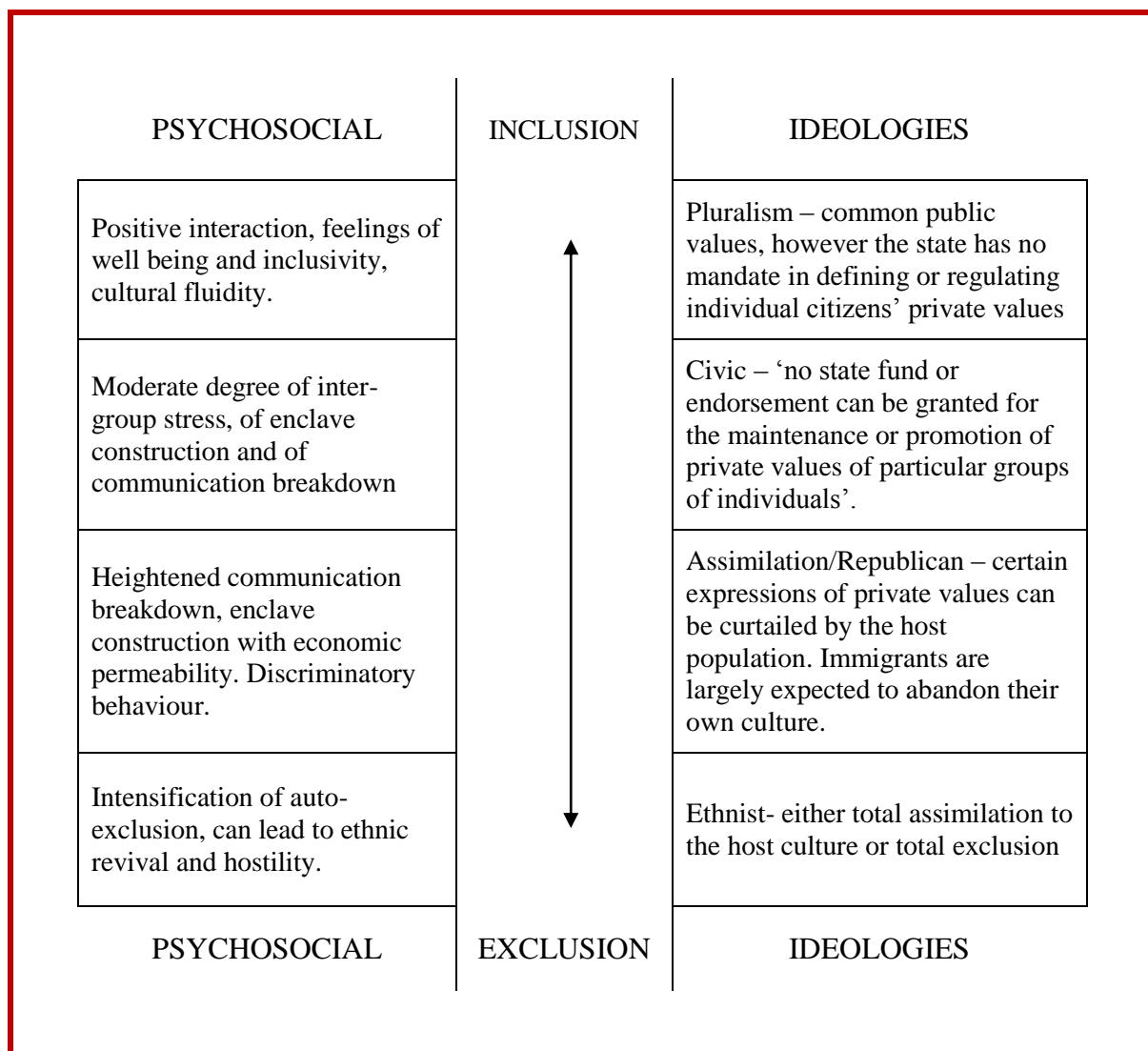
### 1.2.1 Immigrant populations' psychosocial wellbeing

Newnham (2006) articulated Berry's (2011) claimed that when state ideologies stipulate external boundaries internal boundaries are subsequently defined for immigrant groups and these have serious repercussions. Immigrants', migrants', asylum seekers' and inadvertently, the host populations' psychosocial wellbeing depend on the degree of exclusivity/inclusivity built into such policies.

Different models of acculturation and their consecutive psychosocial wellbeing are depicted in Figure 1.1 below. The diagram demonstrates that the greater the inclusion between locals and immigrants, the greater are the feelings of wellbeing. Hannan (2004) added two ontological dimensions to that of assimilation and pluralism which help to elaborate these models; a *natural society* is synonymous to that of assimilation and those of pluralism with a *human society*. A natural society is one in which human rights are subservient to holders of power and reflect a state devoid of introspection. In contrast the human society is one that adheres to human solidarity, peace, fraternity and unremunerated aid. Natural societies are not only those who adopt an assimilation model of integration, but also a civic or republican model popular in France (see Van Zanten, 2012). These models translated into a lack of psychosocial wellbeing and increased resistance and hostility toward the *mainstream* inhabitants of the society. Semi-permeable or contained enclaves of ethnic groups develop as a means to combat feelings of exclusion and insecurity (Resnik, Sabar, Shoham & Shapira, 2001). In civic and plural models of integration immigrant stress is reduced or eliminated based on dialogue and cross development. All these models are developed in nation states' response to increasing pluralisation of their societies.

Another example of integration is that of a plural society in which several different cultural or ethnic groups reside together with a shared political and social framework (Brooks, 2002). Sam and Berry (2006) maintain that "all contemporary societies are now culturally plural: no society is made up of people having one culture, one language, and one identity" and that "there has been a long standing assumption that such cultural diversity within societies will eventually disappear" (p.22). This is because intercultural communication is a creative and reactive process in which new customs and values are generated, stimulating resistance and agentive change, rather than simply leading to cultural domination and homogenisation. This argument is interesting as it allows for a discussion on individual-collective experiences as

changes take place collectively and individually (see discussion under Section 1.3 of this chapter). In the words of Dasen (2001), such a reflection is important as it draws the attention to the inter-individual variations which are often neglected in ideological interpretations of human groups.

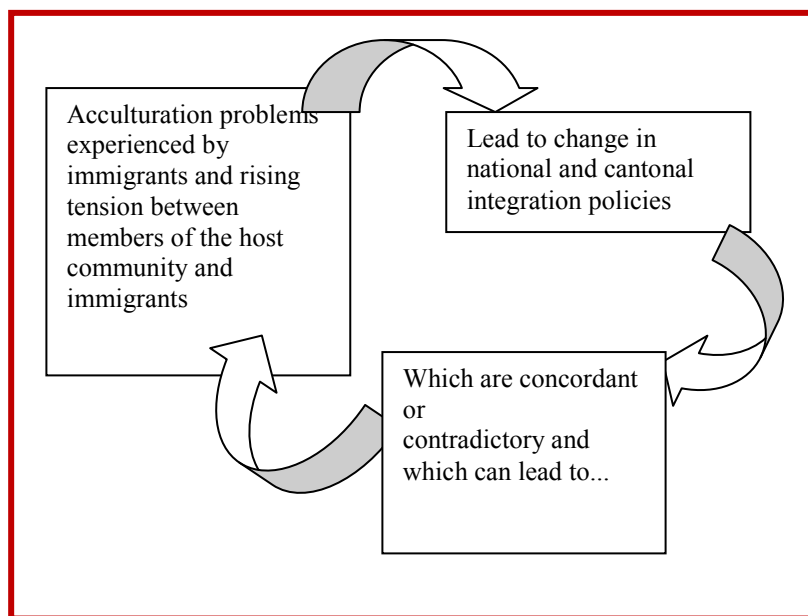


*Figure 1.1 Psychosocial wellbeing and political acculturation models (Newnham 2006 adapted from Bourhis et al., 1997 and Berry, 1997)*

Berry (2012) maintains that there are two kinds of implicit integration/acculturation models in plural societies. The first is typified by one dominant society, on the margins of which various minority groups reside. The second model is one where there is a concerted effort on behalf of the nation state to acknowledge the interests and needs of the various groups incorporating them into the national structure and framework without interfering with their internal

mechanisms. The second model is illustrative of a bi-directional dynamic reconstruction of all the groups' life values and practices.

Bourhis, Moise, Perreault and Senecal's (1977) discussion on the dynamics that occur between immigrants and nationals reflect much of Berry and Dasen's preoccupations above. They argue for an acceptance of individual choice and bi-directional interplay between the two parties stating that one cannot draw a direct line from political acculturation models to immigrant groups' psychosocial well-being as there is a factor of choice involved. That is to say, it is rather the concordance of immigrant populations integration desires with that of the local population that results in divergent levels of consensus or conflict between the cultures (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Vedder, 2001) and this influences policymaking (see figure 1.2 below adapted from Newnham, 2006).



*Figure 1.2 Bi-directional mechanisms of integration (Newnham, 2006)*

These reflections are reiterated in the studies carried out by Ryer, Alden & Paulhaus (2000) as well as Ben Shalom and Horenczyk (2003) who reveal that immigrant populations have several preferences as to how they wish to relate to other groups. Montreal and Bourhis (2004) demonstrate that a particular groups' choice might not be concomitant to that of the mainstream group resulting in tension, conflicts and repression due to xenophobic fears.

Berry (2012) refers to these choices as acculturation "strategies as they consist of both attitudes and behaviours" (p.25). There are four integration strategies desired by immigrant

groups: assimilation, separation, integration and marginalisation. Assimilation into the mainstream society is chosen when immigrants do not want to maintain their cultural identity and seek rather to fully take on the mainstream ways of functioning, in some cases becoming more *British than the British*. The opposite of this strategy is defined as the *separation* alternative and immigrants choose to retain their cultural integrity refusing that of the nation state. Both alternatives are extreme and can lead to high levels of stress and anger. Integration, on the other hand, is where groups seek to maintain cultural integrity, “while at the same time seeking, as a member of an ethnocultural group, to participate as an integral part of the larger society” (p.26). The last possibility, marginalisation leads to exclusion or discrimination and relies on little need for cultural maintenance and little reasons for having relations with others. Such possibilities of individual-collective choice depend on the national acculturation model put into place and maintained by a nation state and its society.

Whereas Berry (2012) refers to acculturation strategies, Laframboise, Coleman and Gerton (1993) adopted the term *biculturalism*. However, they added four different ways in which groups could interact with each other: 1) assimilation – (the same as Berry above); 2) acculturation – where the immigrant groups will lose some of their initial culture but will always be identified as belonging to their immigrant group; 3) alternation – referring to individuals that know and assume different cultures and can alter his or her behaviour to fit a particular social context at a given time; and 4) multicultural – where individuals maintain their distinct identity but interact with the mainstream society and other groups for common national or economic needs. As discussed previously in this text, multiculturalism has several definitions and that of Leframboise et al. (1993) is just another example of the contradictions contained within this category. With regards to home-school relations, Julia Resnik, Shabar and Shapira (2001) proclaim that the adoption of a multicultural strategy, as described above leads to the construction of semi-permeable enclaves, arguing that such forms of existence are mostly created due to the immigrant parents’ experiences with the dominant culture. “Such partial segregation is, on the one hand, beneficial and, on the other, detrimental to self-worth. Children are able to retain a strong cultural image of themselves and therefore self-respect” (Resnik et al. 2001, p.428), which helps them to survive in the dominant culture’s hostile environment. On the other hand, such segregation strengthens images of differences as the children approach the job market and the world of adults. Minority children learn that in order to succeed in such an environment they have to comply with the semi-permeable enclave rules

and are therefore not equally part of the dominant group (Newnham, 2006). Berry (2012) claimed that the outcome of a healthy acculturation model is a multidimensional interaction between populations residing in a national state. I believe that the realisation of such a concept could take many generations and cannot evolve without degrees of conflict and negotiation. Moreover, no process of acculturation can be defined as leading to a homogenous outcome for all individuals at all times.

As this section shows, immigrants' wellbeing is intricately woven into their process of sense-making (Hervik, 2004). Hervik spoke of national identity as being a popular consciousness which refers not only to the way that people represent and account for their social world in everyday talk, but also to their ways of perceiving those that are not considered part of that national identity. Hervik's "research on neo-racism (2004) shows how identities of popular consciousness can be retooled and extended to new situations" (Holland & Lachicotte Jr., 2005, p.23). His study dealt with the difficulties expressed by the Danish nationals towards the influx of Muslim refugees in the 1990's. The Danes could not accept them as being Danish because they considered Denmark as their home and the refugee people as guests. The refugee populations were expected to show gratitude, to interfere as little as possible with the household rules and were not encouraged to perceive their visit as permanent. The basis of the Danish identity was founded in political talk of particular other cultures being inadaptable to the Danish way of life. "Any claim they make to civil and political relations is presumptuous misbehaviour which arrogates a position no guest should have" (p.24). Similarly in Switzerland, cantonal integration policies deal with approaches and measures adopted by agencies that help or hinder positive interaction between immigrant groups as they make sense of social and political discourse. A former analysis of discourse and practice amongst the different immigrant groups residing in the area in which this study took place indicates that diversity is only permitted where it is under control, non-threatening and where migrant and refugee populations are maintained in a position of social, political and economic marginalisation (Newnham, 2006) so as not to interfere with conceptions of being a national. Sadly, making sense of immigrants in this way reflects neoconservative beliefs and "finds only the exclusionary ground of unbridgeable differences" to rely on (Holland et al., 2005, p.24). Political models do not only have consequences for immigrants but also for those that uphold them.

Despite the results of the works of scholars such as Berry (2012) or Kymlicka (2012), I argue that in most areas of the world multiculturalism conveys the idea of many cultures, each distinct from one another, implying boundaries rather than continuities (McAllister 1997; Laframboise et al, 1993). Additionally, at the individual level (McAllister, 1997); the application of multicultural concepts does not do away with categorisations of *us and others* in dialogue and practice, thus enabling racist and xenophobic acts to emerge (Lentin, 2004). It appears that neither do policies of assimilation. Relying on the words of Appiah (2006) I question “(u)nder what rubric to proceed? Not ‘globalisation’ – a term that once referred to a marketing strategy, and then came to designate a macroeconomic thesis, and now can seem to encompass everything, and nothing. Not ‘multiculturalism’- another shape shifter, which so often designates the disease it purports to cure”(p.xiii).

The concept of cosmopolitanism appears to be more expansive, although it is equally contested (Appiah, 2006). The concept refers to people as belonging to the cosmos and moves away from identification of self through nation states and cultural structures. Under this concept individual-collectives recognise other groups as being beneficial and non-antagonistic expressed through the ability to choose their interactive strategy in the given context. In opposition, national policies are historical events and group recognition of these policies tie individuals to political scripts over which they have little control. An individual choice of how one wishes to define oneself - whether this be linked to skin colour, religion or sexual behaviour - is defined by the categorisation that drives the recognition. Recognition is bound to the imposed categorisation and all its ailments (Appiah, 2006). Warmington (2009) proposes a solution to the conundrum stating that the concept of race should be conceived of as a mediating tool and that “the challenge to race-conscious scholars... is the production of tools, pedagogic tools, for thinking about race and for encouraging the strategic use of race as an organising principle for social justice struggles” (p.294). Cosmopolitans purport that a way of approaching the question of race is to conceptualise people of the earth as branches of the same family where material and cognitive tools should be pooled and shared (Appiah, 2006).

Based on the works of Wertz (1985, 1991) and Warmington (2009), I adopt the position that the concept of a nation state is a sociocultural artefact that internally contains the binary of *us and other* constituted on the basis that in the modern world everyone should be in possession of a *nationality*, an imagined mediating community (Anderson, 1991). The community is

imagined as no one individual ever gets to meet all the others that make up the community, the concept remains at the level of the ideal. Whether it is a perceived reality or an actual reality, the imagined community is very powerful even leading to death in order to maintain sovereignty (Anderson, 1991). Nation states attempt to create and maintain homogenous Aryan blocks of populations, the pure race free of any contamination, in order to maintain control and economic productivity. Karl Marx proclaimed that the classification of human groups into economic work forces is a political game that produces internal contradictions of use value and exchange value (Wilde, 1989). The interpretation of the use value and exchange value of immigrant populations by nation states in our contemporary world is mostly sadly lacking in coherence. Parekh (2000) maintains that it does not suffice for nation states to tolerate minority groups as it cannot serve as a substitute for harmonious coexistence and consequently Warmington's appeal for a retooling of the concept of race as a socio-political artefact is of great interest. Using the concept of generalisations proposed by Wertz (1991, 1998), I therefore extend the concept of race in his argument to all forms of categorisations of human differences and maintain that in order to break open the "black box" (Warmington, 2009, p. 294) of reification behind these conceptions of otherness, an agentive and powerful mobilisation of investigation into the "networks of assemblages of people, concepts, tools and technologies" (Warmington, 2009, p. 294) is required.

The following question that needs to be pursued in the process of such an investigation is what socio-political tools should be put into place in an attempt to create a healthy mix devoid of an *either-or* badge of difference where we as one human race recognise both the "centrality of difference within human identity and the fundamental moral unity of humanity" (Appiah, 1994). Phinney and Alipuria (2006) maintain that, within a concept of multiple social categorisations and where the individual experiences two (or more) simultaneous socio-cultural worlds and manages "an internal complexity involving two potentially conflicting, often enriching, parts of one's ethnic racial, or cultural self" (p.211), the individual is often rejected by both parties. The complexity of non-acceptance in the reconstruction of self is an important academic topic. One way of perceiving this is to envisage the reconstruction of self as fulfilling a need or a desire that goes beyond mere fulfilment of biological needs (Miettinen, 2005). The next section shall now elaborate upon the concept of a reconstruction of self, an *unfinished business* (Murakami and Middleton, 2006).



### 1.3 Reconstruction of self – *an unfinished business*

Phinney et al. (2001) proposed that ethnic and national identities, and their role in adaptation, can best be understood in terms of an ongoing bi-directional confrontation between the attitudes and characteristics of immigrants and the responses of the receiving society. The confrontations are moderated by the particular circumstances, defined by greater or lesser roles of power, of the immigrant group within the new society (see also Newnham, 2006; Berry, 2012). Based on the works of Berry, Phinney et al. carried out an international study of adolescent immigrants. They refer to ethnic and national identity as being two dimensions of “group identity that vary independently” (p.495). Each identity can be either secure and strong or developed and weak. They state that the differences of acculturation and ethnic identity are not always clear but they define acculturation as being a broader more general term that refers to values, behaviours and attitudes that change when two cultures come into contact and that ethnic identity refers more specifically to the “subjective sense of belonging to a group or culture”(p.459). They conclude that immigrants forced to choose a model of assimilation by neglecting their own values and behaviours might result in feelings of hostility, depression and loss of wellbeing, retaining either a fragmented image of self or abandoning one or the other in order to construct a feeling of cohesion. Bhatia and Ram (2009), whilst recognising the value of the works of cross cultural studies on immigrants acculturation such as those carried out by Phinney (1990, 2001, 2005) and Berry (1997, 1998, 2005, 2012), question immigrants’ reconstruction as being represented in fixed linear stages and universal psychological processes. They furthermore question whether an acculturation process in a certain nation state can be the same for all immigrant cultures. Based on the works of Hall (1990) they argue for seeing cultural identity not as an essence but as a positioning where “identity is situated in politics and does not evolve out of some authentic, universal origin”(p.42).

Identity is a psychological discourse about the self relying on the existence of having an inner core, a dominant conception in Western culture. Such notions of the “continuous, self-sufficient, developmental unfolding, inner dialectic of selfhood,” (Hall, 1991a, p.42), imply that there is an *authentic* or *real* self that we potentially could achieve at some given point in time. Identities are constructed from the individuals’ self categorisation, from his or her identification, or changing sense making process over time (Märtsin, 2009). Human beings come into being through our invention of types and subtypes (Bakhurst, 2011; Appiah, 2005).

“In identification, I shape my life by the thought that something is an appropriate aim or an appropriate way of acting for an American, a black man, a philosopher” (Appiah, 2005, p.67). Bhatia and Ram (2009) add a useful perspective to this line of thought, stating that acculturation or the formation of immigrant identity needs to be seen as being constructed and deconstructed within a “historical context, bound up in a set of political positions, and based on negotiation, dislocation and conflict” (p.143). However, in these reflections is a lack of the recognition of a person’s identification of self or sense making within different life worlds or life situations.

Leontiev (1978) states that a person makes sense of his daily actions and activities and it is the positioning of these activities at any given moment in time that constitute the perception of self in the world. Sense making is therefore far from being a linear process: Immigrants’ negotiation is fluid, dynamic, interminable, often unstable and achieving integration may simply not be an option and/or may be achieved temporarily, only to be lost at some point and so on (Bhatia and Ram, 2009). The acculturation journey is not a teleological trajectory that has a fixed end point but instead has to be continuously negotiated. Additionally, missing from the discussion proposed by Berry and Phinney are the issues of *conflict, power, and asymmetry* affecting many immigrants reconstruction of self. In certain situations, an immigrant cannot freely choose whether they want to assimilate, become marginalised or integrated within the larger society and therefore I maintain that acculturation or integration is rather a process that involves continuous, contested negotiations that will forever be in progress as an immigrant grapples with his and her place in the larger structures provided by history, culture and politics. The conundrum developed through political identifications of *us and other* is fuelled by a human need to categorise information and roles of power. Unfortunately the consequences are not always positive. “Where a classification of people as Ls is associated with a social conception of Ls, some people identify as Ls, and people are sometimes treated as Ls, we have a paradigm of a social identity that matters for ethical and political life. That it matters for ethical life... flows from the fact that it figures in identification, in people’s shaping and evaluation of their own lives; that it might matter for politics flows from the fact that it figures in treatment by others, and that how others treat one will help determine one’s success and failure in living one’s life” (Appiah, 2006, p.69).

Immigrant populations need to negotiate new environments and during this negotiation conceptions of self are often radically altered. The process of reconstruction of self is a two way process of negotiation where political forces come into play. In this thesis I reflect on and study how participants of the Swiss national group reconfigure their historically created perceptions of migrant and refugee mothers to include others in the conception of *we*, as elegantly articulated in the extract below:

*The nation-state is where we, as social beings, must get along, if, by definition, we are to be both social and human. Seldom is the nation-state exclusively about how an I or a single individual can get along, but rather about a We. And where the We is the subject, we are into questions of differences and possible inequalities: we are talking about producing a single way of life for the several or many that make up this we, and who must somehow discover a way that allows the many to co-exist and to even behave as if they are, in fact a big One, or a We (Foster, 2006).*

Furthermore, the study traces an immigrant person's reconstruction of self to a position that is more holistic and elaborate, going beyond boundaries.

#### **1.4 Nation states culture and learning**

The problem that arises with definitions of nation states, cultures and development is that only too often there is confusion as to how they interconnect. As with the concepts of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism, the term culture alone is problematic to such an extent that "you reach for your dictionary" (Appiah, 2005) when hearing it. Cultures often appear as fixed contained structures which dictate to a certain degree how, or what, choices the individual can make (see Bourdieu (1989) and Geertz (1973)). Perceptions of cultures as fixed and static allow for categorisations of human beings based on cultural behaviour and colour. Hall (1995) purports that such conceptions of culture give rise to national identity as being a closed static entity. Mary Douglas, in an interview with John Clay (downloaded, 21.03.2010), elaborated upon certain problematic aspects of the theoretical approaches that interpreted cultures as fixed bounded entities or structures in which people are portrayed as simply reproducing culturally dictated ancestral patterns of life. Douglas stated that "if society is constructed on the notion of accountability how can people be simple pawns of their structure". Structure theory therefore contains a self-contradiction as it implies that humans

are not thinking; the structure does it for them. Furthermore, she adds that stability is not a reality, as cultural changes take place continually and as individuals creatively interact with each other and with their changing physical environment, they strategically adjust their ways and beliefs to cope with new challenges. Cultural conflicts in this manner arise out of non-negotiation of stability and change.

Bhabha (2003) eloquently states this in the following fashion: “Faced with the fatal notion of an uncontaminated culture in European culture and the absurd notion of an uncontaminated culture in a single country... we are therefore pressed to maintain the ideal of a world culture, while admitting it is something we cannot imagine. We can only conceive it as the logical term of the relations between cultures. The fatality of thinking of ‘local’ cultures as uncontaminated or self-contained forces us to conceive of ‘global cultures’, which itself remains unimaginable. What kind of logic is this?” (pp. 53-54).

A provocative question that Bhabha’s words raise is that, if the world only consists of hybrid cultures, then how is the culture of a nation state to be determined? Where are the boundaries between whom or what is in and who or what is out? These boundaries can only be determined through differentiation. In other words, “(m)ulticulturalists” committed to the instantiation of social and cultural differences within a democratic socius have to deal with a structure of the ‘subject’ constituted within the ‘projective riled’ of political alienation. ... (T)he identificatory language of discrimination works in reverse: ‘the racial/cultural identity of ‘true nationals’ remains invisible but is inferred from... the quasi-hallucinatory visibility of the ‘false nationals’- Jews, ‘wops’, immigrants, indios, natives, blacks”. While such closed conceptions help to unite a nation and produce a national identity (Hall, 1996, pp.187-188), relative to an objective of integration, such forms of interpretation take a step backwards.

Cattacin, Gerber, Sardi & Wegener (2006) maintain that Switzerland has a history of xenophobic behaviour and attitudes and that the concepts of enemies found formerly in the Bolsheviks, Communists, and Jews, today it translated into the so-called fake asylum-seekers and migrants. “The skin colour – called ‘culture’ and the concept of ethnopluralism are important from this point of view” (p.16) and that this concept of the enemy in Switzerland is based on “pseudo-scientific arguments such as “they take things away from us” or “they drive expensive cars and do not work”, on prejudices concerning social politics such as “they are

only here to profit from our social security”, “just hang around” and/ or “are criminal”, or on cultural prejudices such as “they take our women”. They are stereotyped for all kinds of social “evil” as dealers/ junkies or homosexuals, and are blamed for spreading AIDS in our society” (p. 16). Cattacin et al. (2006) add that the “The totality of views, behaviours and actions, organised or not, that are based on racist or ethnically caused social inequality of human beings, striving for ethnic homogeneousness of nations and rejecting the precept of equality in human-rights declarations, stressing the pre-eminence of the community over the individual, supporting subordination of the citizen under the reason of state, rejecting the pluralism of values in a liberal democracy and wanting to reverse democratisation.” (p.14) is paramount to end in a degeneration of the social structure.

Categorisations manifest in public opinion transform and are transformed by the national immigration policy and model. In Taylor’s (1992, pp.66-67) words, “the presumption of equality found in models such as multiculturalism or pluriculturalism becomes a judgment of worth where the hybrid is not perceived as valuable within the nation state and is sentenced to a *liminal* existence”. Liminality (from the Latin *līmen*, meaning threshold) is a term coined by Van Gennep (1909), and later taken up by Victor Turner, to designate a space in between two biologically ritualised states where the former has been partially left behind, but the new has not yet become known.

Bhabha (1994) suggests a solution other than one containing national socio-cultural boundaries. He argued that a liminal space, a space between one culture and another, is where *symbolic interaction* is possible and where the “connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white takes on a new meaning”. The “intestinal passage” between two fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridism that entertains differences without an assumed or imposed hierarchy. He adds that the transition of thought from the “specific to the general”, from the “material to the metaphoric”, is not a smooth passage of transition and transcendence. “The middle passage is a process of displacement and disjunction that does not totalise experience. Increasingly, ‘national’ cultures are being produced from the perspective of disenfranchised minorities” (p.4). The incapacity to understand cultures, and therefore migrant people, under these terms designates migrant persons to liminal spaces within a community where their value is misinterpreted but where, given the right tools, they could be part of symbolic interaction.

Cultures have always been mobile, they are transported by their creators - people. Cultures and nationalities enable a claim of belonging and derive their plausibility from “the basic notion that it’s good to be socialised, good to have social ties” (Appiah, 2005, p.124). Quoting Raz, Appiah (2005) adds ““(i)t is in the interest of every person to be fully integrated in a cultural group’ yet if the value we’re honouring is ultimately that of sociality, of being integrated into a group, one might fairly ask what work is being done by the ‘cultural’ predicate. More to the point: what’s meant by being ‘fully integrated’ in a cultural group?” (p.125).

What have nation states to gain by accepting non nationals as part of their socio-political system? Bakhtin (1981) argues that the hybrid person is of great worth to our evolving world as he or she is able to perceive the world outside of constants and contained spaces of meaning-making, and that despite inequalities of power between host cultures and guest cultures, the hybrid remains our only point of negotiation. “The... hybrid is not only double-voiced and double-accented... but is also double-language; for in it there are not only (and not even so much) two individual consciousnesses, two epochs...that come together and consciously fight it out on the territory of the utterance... .It is the collision between differing points of view on the world that are embedded in these forms... such unconscious hybrids have been at the same time profoundly productive historically: they are pregnant with potential for new world views, with new ‘internal forms’ for perceiving the world in words” (p.36). Bakhtin’s argument above attests to a topic of investigation that is long overdue and which this thesis shall pursue. It is the possible transformation of ‘*I*’ as a nation to ‘*we*’, where the *we*’s are continually reconfiguring themselves and their socio-political environment as it is not only the immigrant that needs to reconfigure their world but the national as well, as national or immigrants are both categories and both contain their ills. In Appiah’s words (2005), “(i)ndeed, when multiculturalists like Kymlicka say that there are so many ‘cultures’ in this or that country, what drops out of the picture is that every ‘culture’ represents not only difference but the elimination of difference: the group represents a clump of relative homogeneity, and that homogeneity is perpetuated and enforced by regulative mechanisms designed to marginalise and silence dissent from its basic norms and mores. From a historical perspective, nationalism might be described as imperialism with contiguity” (p.152). The concept of culture and those of how to deal with diversity have ramifications in all social institutions many of which are insidious.

### 1.5 Immigrants and Education – a liminal, hybrid space

Sexton (1975) alleged that:

“The total impression transmitted to many educators by the concept [of culture deprivation] is that the ‘rejected’, ‘disadvantaged’, or ‘deprived’, child is handicapped, not by the school or society, but by their own culture and behaviour, and that he is so different and ‘crippled’, that he cannot be expected to achieve as others. Many educators point to the culture of the child and family as total explanation of school failure.” (p.59).

The above citation refers to a perspective dubbed the deficit model or the *culturally disadvantaged child* that began around the 1960’s (Black, 1966). This model is based on the premise that “the blame for the problem or injury is located – by the more powerful party – in the individual person, the victim – rather than in the structural problems of the unit. Deficit thinking is tantamount to the process on ‘blaming the victim’. It is founded on imputation, not documentation” (Valencia, 1997, p.x) and various theoretical variations arose: Hess (1970) proposed the theory of *socialisation of apathy and underachievement*, Edwards (1967) the *cultural deprivation* model and Hess and Shipman (1965) the *accumulated environmental deficits* model. These theories all argued to a lesser or greater degree that students who were failing in school must make the effort along with their parents to rectify their deficiency. Furthermore they stipulate that the deficit is largely due to disorganised, female-headed families that refuse to embrace the educational values of the dominant group and educate their children with models that counteract the school models (Solorzano, 1992b). Such instantiations became coined, due to Bourdieu (1977, 2003), as *cultural capital*. That is, cultural assets that are recognised by the schools and school agents and that differ to the cultural capital of minority groups.

Ogbu (1974), arguing along the same lines, exposed three current explanations for school failure of minority children that were prominent within the 1960’s and early 70’s. Firstly, minority children fail in school as they are retarded in their psychological, social and language development due to their home and neighbourhood environment. Moreover, the minority children grow up in cultures that are different from those of the more affluent. The more affluent society holds the values and norms that are considered just and on which the school

system is based. Valencia proposed that solutions to bridging the social gap relied generally on students and parents acquiring good school habits, parental involvement in education, as well as political involvement and action (Valencia, 1997). Ogbu (1974), in reply to such reasoning, asserted that the above arguments are erroneous; since many sub-cultures maintain their cultural ways without jeopardizing their children's school learning and that this perspective was founded purely on a distortion of minority peoples' lifestyles based on unrepresented statistics. The second explanation blames the school. School settings or types of education and teachers that are disciplinarians rather than teachers were among the given causes. One of the solutions proposed to solve this problem was to hire performance contract systems. The educational firms did not ignore the deficit theory but were supposed to be specially trained to overcome the effects of this system. These interventions had very poor results, as did the open or informal schools proposed on the British model. Ogbu's third explanation was based on genetic inferiority. It was stated that blacks did less well than whites due to "inferior genetic endowment for intelligence" (p.8), which he argued relied on common hearsay as there is no scientific evidence to sustain this claim.

Drawing on the theme of categorizations, expressed in the beginning of the chapter, Olson (1999) wrote that: "Categorising people is one of life's small, usually harmless, pleasures, but for psychologists and educators, classifications are a way of life" (p.17). However, the discussion in this chapter attests that categorisations are not harmless. Categorisations of different cultures and the hierarchical model of the 1940's were reiterated as an explanation of migrant children's school difficulties. Ogbu argues that the deficit model had been revived in the early 1970's due to a failure of previously proposed solutions to enhance the education of black students, and that the question of why black children do not take their tests seriously is more to the point than the question of genetic difference. This solution was easier than questioning the dominant script of the educational and political context and as such, rethinking required a radical socio-cultural upheaval.

Despite their long-lasting influence, deficit models began to be severely questioned towards the end of the 1980's. They were criticised as failing to recognise that contact between the school and the homes of minority groups remained relatively closed due to the schools' and school agents' perception of these groups and an ignorance of their daily lives. Several studies illustrated that migrant parents did believe their children's education to be important, but that



schools did not recognise the forms of contribution that they gave to their children's education (Irizarry & Marlowe, 2010).

It is not much of a surprise to find that bounded perceptions of culture within a society are accompanied by bounded pedagogies. "(D)ifferences in definitions of culture raise issues which are isomorphic to those raised when definitions of pedagogy are raised" (Daniels, 2004, p.132). Vygotsky and his followers claimed that human development rises dialectically out of his or her socio-cultural environment. Quoting Ratner and Bernstein, Daniels illustrates how scholars have perceived culture and pedagogies as containing similar features: "culture includes social concepts but also concrete social institutions that are arranged in a division of labour and governed by definite principles of behaviour, forms of control and power, allocations of opportunities, and rewards and punishments" (Ratner, 1997, p.116). In very similar terms, Daniels (2004) explains that Bernstein affirmed that "[t]he situation of multicultural classrooms was a path breaker in educational theories as it required new ways of understanding education and the transmission of knowledge. The concept of cognitive education began to be recognized as having a value ... and, under this theory, content as a problem was replaced by the students' cognitive strategies and metacognitive skills. Cognitive education programs aimed at developing basic cognitive skills necessary for efficient study in all curricular areas" (p.136). Studies of this nature and others were inspired by the works of Vygotsky (1978) who affirmed that cognitive skills were developed through the mediation of psychological and cognitive tools. Education needed to be understood as a "purposeful and reflective organisation of the relationship between educator and child" (van Oers, 2009, p.213; see Daniels, 2001) and that it has "become clear that cultural institutions (like family, school) and cultural tools (like language) embody structures that largely influence human activity explicitly or tacitly" (van Oers, 2009, p.213). Furthermore, Heedegard and Fler (2009) argue that it is not just school or home that influences the life and development of children but all the socio-cultural institutions that surround the child and within which the child participates. Development is conceptualised by these scholars as being a dynamic dialectical interconnecting socio-cultural phenomenon in which the fundamental relationship is between activity and human development, and where human development is determined by and determines cultural institutions and tools.

Whereas Bhabha (1994, 2005) refers to spaces between two cultures as liminal (see conversation above), Gutiérrez, Rymes and Larson (1995) refer to it as being a third space where new forms of interaction become possible between two groups. Such new forms of interaction are actually hybrid forms, as their history is inclusive in their production. The groups within the article by Gutiérrez et al. are teachers and children of migrant families. While the scripts (patterns of social interaction) of the teachers contain values of the dominant society and are in the form of a monologue, those of the students resist the teachers' values, making learning difficult. The authors therefore propose a new space where there is a possibility for a new authentic script, scripts that lack roles of power, to be produced. Gutiérrez et al. (1995) situate their theoretical approach to learning in the cultural-historical theory of Vygotsky and his followers, where learning is intrinsically understood as being a collective cultural-historical process, whether it is within the school environment, the home, or the public playground.

Gutiérrez et al. (2005, 2008) argued that a study of the daily classroom environment - who gets to study what and the scripts and dialogue that are carried out - would reveal just how power roles and a dynamic system of relations are carried out within the classroom, reflecting those of the wider society. Such contemporary thoughts and practical solutions to the complexity of culture in movement offer a far richer future for the world population of today. Many of the discussions held on immigrant and minority populations and schooling resulted in home-school projects.

#### *1.5.1 Home-school projects*

Home-school projects that attempt to improve on families socio-cultural resources are not uncommon (see Brooks, Gorman, Harman; Hutchinson & Wilkin: 1996, 1997, and 2008). Most claim that the lack of education of parents has serious consequences on their children's formal learning abilities. However, Smith and Spurling (2001) argue that parents' literacy competence is not the only contributing variable in their children's education and that from a motivational point of view any parental involvement in children's schooling is positive. Furthermore, these studies were largely only interested in how parents could enhance their children's education and were based on deficit models of education "where (well-meaning) middle-class educators teach the 'right way' to read ignoring their cultural, social, parental and

literacy strengths, thereby undermining their values and self-esteem (Auerbach, 1989; Bates, Taylor, & Tomlin, n.d.)” (Benseman, 2004).

In an endeavour to overcome these former fragmented approaches, Bensemen (2004) argued that a family learning program requires the following components: collaboration and partnership between participants and teachers; the teaching body should be knowledgeable on cultural and learning differences as well as reliable; curricula should be adapted to adults needs and home culture; networking with the wider community is essential; formative assessment should be frequent, and there should be solid funding and extensive collective collaboration between various partners within a project.

Other projects focused on parental engagement in their children’s schooling (see Calabrese Barton, Drake, Perez, St. Louis & George, 2004; Calabrese, Barton & Drake, 2002; Gutman & McLoed, 2000 and Frieder, 1999). As with Bensemen above, Calabrese et al. (2004) claimed that projects that deal with home-school need to work on breaking down the barriers which requires an understanding of how they were sustained within the community.

In a communication with Miriam Wenger-Fridman, a psychologist and paediatrician in Geneva, Switzerland she claimed that parents of refugee and lower-class migrant families are made to believe that they are doing something intrinsically wrong. This message, she added, is not conveyed overtly, and so when the parents attempt to make sense of the school agents’ monologue to them, they find themselves unable to articulate their feelings. She used a case study to illustrate her argument: whereas Mr. Dupont, Belgian doctor, will be integrated and given positive social messages daily, Mr. Paolo, a Portuguese labourer will become an immigrant labourer living a sort of social depersonalisation, a mutilation, incapable of deciphering the particular meaning of each social message that is destined to him, unable to distinguish his exact role between the different partners with whom he deals daily and unable to find social markers that enable him to navigate within the social tissue of reception. Therefore, when these parents are told that their children are experiencing difficulties at school they are told at the same time that they as parents need to make more of an effort to help their child. Mr. and Mrs. Paolo arrived in Wenger-Fridman’s office and immediately began to produce legal documents such as passports and work permits. Mrs. Paolo then stated that they were good parents, that they fed their child well, gave her love and attention, dressed her

correctly, taught her how to behave and be polite, and bought her toys, but that she could not read French very well. This discourse, she claimed, was the result of the covert messages projected by the social environment. The parents felt powerless and ineffective after their meeting with their child's teacher unable to decipher what they were doing wrong. In their understanding "was it not the teacher's role to teach their child to read French, and was their role not to clothe, feed, guide and love their child?" Wenger Fridman asserts that it is the socio-cultural perception of the migrant labourer and the covert discourse that provokes the child's inability to perform and that therapy needs to begin by reinstating the family as real, whole and valued human beings.

This chapter has demonstrated that integration or acculturation models are put into place by nation states in order to regulate the flow of immigrant populations within and between their borders. However, they go far further as they also include varying degrees of inclusion and exclusion for the immigrant populations. Countries that have strong desires to maintain national sovereignty, as is the case in Switzerland, adopt models to reinforce the role of power invested in the mainstream population. The prevalent model of assimilation, expressed with varying degrees of less or more extreme tolerance and exclusion in all social institutions, including that of education, in Switzerland (Dasen, 2001; Newnham, 2006) is one of the least viable as a form of contact between immigrant groups and mainstream groups as it does not allow for individual freedom of choice and furthermore lacks the recognition of common human beliefs, values and behaviours (Phinney et al., 2001; Berry, 2012). The logic of devising home-school projects is to enter into contact with immigrant populations in order to improve on their wellbeing and social mobility. However, some projects reinforce stereotypes and prejudices conveyed toward immigrants in their attempt to reinforce socio-political laws that contain messages of exclusion. Historically created conceptions of others are difficult to eradicate or transform and usually need powerful means such as those provided by political revolutions or international sanctions, for example, as in the case of South Africa during the abolition of the apartheid regime. On a smaller scale social change can be induced by means of intervention programs. I shall now discuss the research context of this thesis, a context beleaguered by the application of an assimilation model of integration at all levels of the social structure.

## CHAPTER 2      THE PROBLEM: THE RESEARCH SITE, THE PARTICIPANTS AND THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This chapter begins with a brief background to the project on which the empirical section of this thesis is based in order to situate the problem that is to follow. The Home-School project is then presented. Following on from this presentation, I discuss the motivation behind my participation within this home-school project as an interventionist-researcher and as a facilitator of two mother-child dyads. Finally, I present my research questions. The first question is related to the integration conundrum within the Home-School project, and the focus of this study. The second is a methodological question which needed to be addressed in order to answer my first research question.

### **2.1    The research site and project context**

Switzerland is a Federation that is divided into twenty-six cantons. A canton is an administrative division and relatively small in demographic size compared to a province or county. They are theoretically sovereign states. Each canton has its own constitution, parliament, government and courts and is responsible for its education, transportation, social institutions and social matters of integration. The laws, work and residential permits concerning migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are still defined by the federal constitution.

In 2002, Switzerland agreed to the bilateral free movement of workers with the European Union. This adhesion has changed the work and residential permits of Switzerland. There are six different types of residential and work permits, of which four apply to persons other than refugees and asylum-seekers. The G-permit is a border-crossing permit that is only administered for work and not for residence. The L-permit is a short-term residential permit administered for a period of one year, the applicant must have found employment and can only renew the permit with the consent of his or her employer. The B-permit is valid for a period of one year, and is offered to EU members or non-EU nationals that have very specific and highly-qualified training. The C-permit is given for permanent residence and is renewed indefinitely. Non-EU members may request this permit after having been employed and resident in Switzerland for a period of twelve years. The permit allows the holders to travel freely and to change employers.

The fifth and sixth permits are exclusively for asylum and refugee people. These permits adhere to the basic principles of the Geneva Convention. They were revised in 2007 and this revision took effect in 2008. The Federal Office for Migration (FOM) is in charge of implementing and enforcing the asylum policy and law. During the period that an individual is filing an asylum application they are granted an N-permit. During this time the holder is not allowed to circulate within Switzerland and remains within an allocated residence. If the application is accepted then the person is granted an F-permit. If rejected the person is returned to their home country.

Permit F holders are provisionally admitted foreign nationals, persons who have been ordered to return from Switzerland to their native countries but in whose cases the enforcement of this order has proved inadmissible (violation of international law), unreasonable (concrete endangerment of the foreign national) or impossible (for technical reasons of enforcement). Thus, their provisional admission constitutes a substitutive measure. Provisional admission may be ordered for duration of twelve months and can be extended by the canton of residence for another twelve months at a time. The cantonal authorities may grant provisionally admitted foreign nationals work permits for gainful employment irrespective of the situation on the labour market and in the economy in general. A residence permit granted at a later date is subject to the provisions of Art. 84 (5) of the Aliens Act (<http://www.bfm.admin.ch>). F-permit holders are not allowed to choose the area in which they will live. They are sent to a particular town and canton, where they live in special accommodation. Relatives may be separated in this process.

Twenty-five percent of the population in which this research took place are foreigners (the population figures are withheld in order to ensure anonymity). At the end of 2003 there were 48'633 foreigners in Switzerland living on an annual B permit, a C permit (living permit) or other permits of shorter duration. 459'945 foreigners (31, 3%) in Switzerland originate from European Economic countries or European Free Trade Associations, in the particular canton the figure is as high as 68.5%. The main countries of origin in Switzerland are: Portugal 13,374, Ex-Yugoslavia 9,849, Italy 8,953, France 4,501, Spain 2,058, Germany 1,669 and Turkey 609. The refugee populations that have been granted asylum in the area within which

this research took place originate from Ethiopia, Somalia, Sri Lanka (Tamil), Kosovo, Croatia, Congo (via the red cross), Macedonia and Syria.

Within the primary schools of this region (size of the region withheld to ensure anonymity) 25-33% of the population are children of immigrant parents. Of these families, 900 are political or economic refugees. 500 of these families are without employment. This is mostly due to their residence permit 'F' which carries social and economic stigma. There are 26,000 F-permit holders (Efionayi-Mader, 2008) in Switzerland. Various NGOs have complained about Swiss Asylum and Refugee organisations as F-permit holders suffer from institutional prejudices and exclusion from the mainstream society (Efionayi-Mader, 2008). Until recently, employing F-permit holders was a lengthy business that involved numerous forms and justifications. Many employers are deterred from employing F-permit holders due to the complications involved, lack of language competency and prejudices. Under the political system of this canton, children hold the same residential permit as their parents. This means that children of 'F' permit holders born in the country carry an 'F' permit and therefore at the end of their compulsory schooling cannot find employment. A research participant stated: "that is when the trouble begins... These children realise that the society lied to them as they believed that if they studied they would find employment" (Newnham, 2006). Many of these teenagers find alternative ways of coping, mostly considered deviant by the larger society, as a way of dealing with various levels of social ambiguities on a daily basis.

As has been discussed in chapter 1 of this thesis, historically, the political integration ethos of this area is one of assimilation. In other words, as one of a host/ guest society (Hervik, 2004) in which the migrant asylum seeker is subliminally made to understand that he/ she is expected to "show gratitude, to interfere as little as possible with the conduct of the 'household' (national) business, and to behave in accordance with household rules" (p.14). In the area of this study, some policies towards economically wealthy immigrants have been relaxed; those towards refugee populations have been exacerbated. For an F-permit holder to obtain a B-permit, all members of the family need to know the official language of the area that they live in, know the politics and history of Switzerland, be in a position to sustain themselves without social benefits, and finally to not have had any complications with the law. As most of these people to date have not been allowed to work, it appears that this law is contradictory. Furthermore, as F permit holders are rarely employed, learning the language is

difficult. F-permit holders are supposed to blend in, but are excluded and therefore cannot become integrated. They are sanctioned for their lack of integration by the refusal of a B-permit which would allow them geographical freedom, employment and the possibility to unite with their relatives.

Due to international political pressure on Swiss politicians to change their views on emigration and immigration, in 2005 it was decided that matters of integration were to be the responsibility of the canton and no longer that of the confederation. A government department of integration was developed and given funds for integration projects. Several projects were implemented by voluntary associations within the area in which this study took place:

- 1) A booklet stipulating the local populations' major concerns towards foreigners' behaviour was drawn up. This booklet is given to all new arrivals. It has been translated into ten different languages. It contains information on correct conduct within the society, such as equal gender roles; how to behave within an apartment block, where to dispose of one's waste, the need to avoid making noise and telephone calls after 9pm, as well as general information on schools and legal rights.
- 2) Several French language classes for foreigners developed offering care for young children during the lessons.
- 3) Cooking and sewing classes as well as simple tea meetings of different cultures arose.
- 4) Associations created summer festivals that held activities, poetry, theatre and food tasting in order to enable people to interact with each other in a friendly space.
- 5) A group of local people created a program in which foreigners could learn how to help newcomers to find their way around government, health and legal institutions.
- 6) The sixth project, *the Home-School project*, is the focus of this thesis. Home-school projects in general are indicated in lower case whereas the project of this study is indicated in upper case.

### *2.1.1 The Home-School project*

The motivation behind this project was due to the Department of Education's decision to place foreign children in their age class allowing them a two year period of adaptation. The project



initiators (6 special education teachers) maintained that there was increasing tension between foreign children and teachers due to this decision. They claimed that while the two year period was long enough for most children, certain children were unable to obtain the necessary primary knowledge needed to become integrated into a normal program and were therefore sent to a school that addressed children with special needs. In turn, special needs teachers complained that the children's parents were impossible to contact, resulting in further estrangement between the children and the institutions. The project initiators therefore proposed to create a socio-cultural space within which a child's mother could revisit her role as mother and invest in her child's education, establishing a contact with the school institution and its teachers. The project organisers contacted an association that was established to help immigrant populations who agreed to house the project. The project holders (the two groups) concluded that entering into contact with the mothers could be achieved through selecting migrant and refugee children experiencing difficulties at school.

The overt objective of the project was to overcome foreign children's learning or behavioural difficulties at school and the covert objective was to facilitate the acculturation of foreign mothers into the wider society through doing homework with their children. Therefore the tool or mediating factor of the project was homework, around which a facilitator intervened on a 2 hour per week basis with a mother-child dyad.

To begin with the Home-School project was composed of three groups: the project initiators (N=10); the voluntary persons (N=10) that worked with the mothers and children, which shall be referred to as facilitators; and the mother-child dyads (N=10). In 2008 the number of voluntary persons had increased to 36 and the mother-child dyads to 40.

The mothers were chosen to participate in the learning dyads (mother-child) due to their children's or child's learning or behaviour difficulties in school. The mothers had a migrant labourer or refugee status (L and F permit). The mothers were from different countries: Sarah (fictive name) was from Sri Lanka and the Hindi religion. She was a typist in a University in Sri Lanka prior to fleeing her country and had two young children. There were two mothers from Somalia, Mary and Anna, both devout Muslims. Mary had two children and was the daughter of a wealthy landlord in Somalia. She had previously cared for the family animals, fruit and vegetable farms that they owned. Her husband was the owner of a transportation

business. Anna had six children. She had married young and did not have a trade. Her husband was a carpenter and certified locksmith. Celia was from Congo. She was Christian and had two children. She was previously the owner of a restaurant and a small shop. Her husband was a football trainer and a mechanic. The fifth, sixth and seventh mothers; Jacky, Mona and Suzanne were Portuguese and Christian. Mona suffered from depression as her husband had left her for another woman and she worked in the vineyards, which she said gave her terrible backache. She had two children. Jacky and Suzanne had only recently arrived in Switzerland when the project began. They both had two children. Their husbands worked on the construction sites in the area. They were looking for work as cleaners or assistant cooks. The eighth mother, Pauline was of Chinese origin, a Buddhist and had three children, she did not work but her husband owned a restaurant in the area that was very productive. The last two mothers, Amalia and Katia were from Macedonia and both were Muslims. They had two children each and had never worked. Their husbands had several menial jobs but could not sustain them. They were still on an F permit.

Within their project outline, the project initiators (a group of special education teachers) stated that in Switzerland migrant labourers and refugee women are isolated from the wider society and that they generally lack understanding of the advantages that they could acquire from the Swiss system, thereby remaining prisoners of their own neglect. Immigrants' behaviour is judged in relation to their own patriarchal cultural values and norms. The religion in the area is Catholicism. Drawing on the works of Holzner (2001), they argued that most migrant women that entered Switzerland had no education or only a marginal education. The statistics used stated that 54% of migrant women had only obtained a school education compared to 62% of Swiss women. Only 23% of migrant women have a professional education compared to 46% of Swiss women. The project organisers claimed that it was due to the women's lack of education and the fact that they could not speak, read, or write the local language that they were unable to navigate within a new society. Based on these statistics, they suggested that it was imperative for foreign women to attend language classes and social clubs in the community. Moreover, they claimed that these women were torn between staying and leaving which deterred them from accepting the long and hard apprenticeship of a language that is strange to them. Furthermore, they stated that mothers were the key to their children's scholarly success, that young children learn how to socialise through their mothers and that

compared to Swiss mothers foreign mothers did not socialise very much. Consequently their behaviour was passed on to their children who then had difficulties socialising at school.

After a year of its activity, the facilitators' reports made it apparent that the project had several problems which were manifested through heated debates at the monthly meetings held between the project initiators and the facilitators. These debates involved several practical and perceptual issues. The teachers said that they were interested in the project but would then not support the facilitators in their task. The facilitators said that they understood the aim of the project but then did the homework tasks with the children while stating that the mothers were incapable of doing homework tasks and the project holders could not agree on what the main objective of the project was.

### *2.1.2 My participation in the project and my research-interventionist role*

My research over the past nine years has focused on migrant and refugee families and schools in Switzerland (see Newnham, 2009; 2006a; 2006b and 2005). My research was motivated by difficulties that I, and my children, encountered when they entered pre-primary school. I was told to not speak English to them as it would create learning difficulties and that I should put them into a crèche at the age of one so as to facilitate their knowledge of their Swiss culture. This was despite the children's father being Swiss. The results of my research indicated that foreigners were in general not desired and that the mainstream population in the area feared that they would contaminate their children.

My second research found its source in the educational departments' claim that children should begin school at the age of two in order to give them equal opportunities due to migrant and refugee parents inability to give them any valuable education. The results of this research indicated that migrant and refugee mothers used more expansive literacy techniques than mainstream middle class parents. The migrant and refugee parents allowed children to explore and mistakes were not reprimanded but accepted as being part of a learning process. The mainstream mothers had experienced frontal and authoritarian literacy techniques at school and they repeated these with their children. The problem therefore was not the parents' lack of ability but rather in the children's transition to their first year at school as most of the teachers, besides one, that I observed used very authoritarian and frontal methods.

The following research that I carried out found its stimulus in questioning the cause of the high level of suicide amongst young teenagers in the area and the recent event that had taken place in the UK where a young girl hung herself. The research revealed that many young refugee and migrant youth are harassed by racist and gender name calling and that in certain cases this led to a desire to commit suicide as a way to escape feeling inadequate and isolated.

Furthermore, I together with the Waris Dirie Foundation was involved in organising a seminar that dealt with Female Genital Mutilation which then became part of a national campaign to protect children from being mutilated. Unfortunately the campaign lacked sensitivity and one of the women with a refugee status, and a friend, confessed that she had been shocked to find out that her physical mutilation was not commanded by Allah. Furthermore she said; *'my husband has this woman friend. She has so many nice things and always men are visiting her with nice things... Why does my husband take her sweet cake'*? I did not know how to answer this question. I preferred to leave her with a bit of doubt and dignity.

I was also a member of the integration commission in the area for eight years lobbying for a more tolerant and expansive approach to integration. I had been invited to participate in this work group as a representative of the foreigners. My position as a foreigner in the group was a confirmation of my exclusion from ever being considered Swiss. At that time the commission was led by a central right-wing political activist who strongly resisted my perspectives. All the outcomes of my research were shared with institutions concerned and with other academic bodies such as teacher training colleges as well as with the parents concerned. In 2005 I was invited to act as a voluntary facilitator and to give advice within the Home-School project due to the difficulties that they were experiencing.

Due to the tension and conflicts within the Home-School project, mentioned above I began scouting the field in search of indicators that could point to the source. My ethnographic interviews revealed that there was a lack of communication between the various stakeholders which was counteracted by the construction and maintenance of abstract categorisations of each other on behalf of the teachers, general mainstream population or the migrant and refugee populations:

*'I was with my sister in (name withheld) she told me that a girl was tired of problems in school she walked in front of the train. The teacher must stop (silence) in Somalia the teacher hits the child the child screams at night the mother goes to the school and tells the teacher to stop. Children do not need to speak before 12 in Somalia they grow up slowly we do not ask them for their opinion why does everyone talk so much in Switzerland (silence) she (teacher) must stop'* (data excerpt: AF211106).

(8 weeks later): *'They have put her with a boy (knocks her knuckles on her head) His mother has problem big problem (knocks her knuckles on her head) now he is like this why does this teacher put (child's name withheld) with this boy. My sister said to me 'be careful...be careful the Swiss'* (data excerpt: AF291106).

These two extracts were taken from a discussion held with a mother that was one of the mother-child dyads in the Home-School project in which I acted as an interventionist researcher. The extracts reveal the frustration and fear of a young mother, with a refugee status, of three children that has been living in Switzerland for the past eight years. Her 5 year old daughter would not speak at school and this infuriated the child's teacher which was expressed in aggressive verbal behaviour toward the child. The teacher sent regular messages written in red ink to the child's parents which exacerbated their relation as the parents could not understand the problem as young children were not expected to speak out in front of adults in her previous country. The mother was afraid for her daughters' psychological well being as she had heard that another child had committed suicide due to tensions between home and school. Furthermore, the solution that the school took was to place her child in a learning group with a child that she considered to have cognitive disabilities (*my interpretation of her action of knocking on her head*). She believed that mental disabilities were transmitted in the same manner as viral infections and was therefore afraid that her daughter would acquire the same cognitive difficulties. In Somalia mothers, she stated, scolded teachers that treated their children inappropriately. She left the researcher with a feeling that she was aware that parents in Switzerland did not interact with the teachers. She told the researcher that the teacher talked with a red pen and mimicked angry strokes in the air, this she said was inappropriate and impolite.

The teacher on the other hand told another story:

*'I know that she can talk, she looks at me with her black eyes and I say talk to me talk to me and she will not say a word. I have even tried talking slowly (she stops talking to reflect) her brother could talk. I have told her parents several times to come and see me but they refuse they do not care about their children's education. I have called the special education department they should take that child away and get her to behave. I cannot do anything for her I do not want her in my class I have too many of these children it is impossible to finish the course work. I am sleeping very badly... '* (turns and begins shuffling papers on her desk). (Data excerpt: TS231106)

Special education teachers were assigned to work with children that manifested learning difficulties at school but only had contact with the course teachers and children, never meeting the parents. Listening to these different versions of the same problem I wondered whether it was possible to change the intolerable situation.

Perhaps a part of the source of the tension could be found in news reports such as the one that appeared in 'Le Temps, 8.11.2001' featuring a strong political debate over the reasons as to why certain cantons in Switzerland had featured so badly in the 2000 Pisa test (Program for International Student Assessment). One of the arguments was that there were more foreign children within the cantons that held the lowest score. National parents were angry, stating that they were losing their birth right to a decent education as teachers had to lower standards in order to accommodate the newcomers. In order to understand the situation I carried out research in families with different cultural background and national statuses. The results of the study indicated that migrant and refugee parents spent a great deal of time educating their children and helping them to do their school work.

Reflecting on the literature review (chapter 1), my perceptions of the problems within the project proposition, my experience in the project and the ethnographic data that I accumulated, I determined that while the theoretical exploration of migrant and refugee mothers socio-cultural insertion were fairly rigorous the mothers were none the less accused of not making the effort to assimilate within the mainstream society and therefore were responsible for the problems that occur at school between their children and the teachers. Moreover, despite there being 157 different nationalities in the region the mainstream population referred to all non-nationals as foreigners. The project holders and facilitators never referred to the mothers by

their names only as they or them. The project holders had never met the mothers as the contact was made between the teachers and the facilitators. The children's teachers did not know their parents and the parents did not feel welcome at the school arguing that they were only summoned by the teachers to be admonished. Furthermore, the elaboration of the project charter contained rules and objectives for the task of doing homework and neglected the primary objective of facilitating the migrant and refugee mothers' assimilation process into the mainstream society. Their project was refused funding due to this lack.

I maintain that a retooling of one's socio-political concepts of otherness to one that is more inclusive and expansive is a win-win situation for both nationals and foreigners alike. I volunteered to run a Change Laboratory with the project holders and the facilitators of the project. They accepted and signed an agreement to participate in the ten sessions (see Appendix 2).

### *2.1.3 The thesis research participants*

The project initially consisted of six special needs teachers, born and raised by Swiss parents and, who were the initiators of the project. Four members of the Immigrants Association joined them. They were: a young woman from Somali parents, born in Switzerland; the head of the association who was a social worker, born and raised in Switzerland; the secretary who was a young woman from another canton who was studying to become a social worker and a lawyer, with a particular interest in the protection of migrants. She was also born and raised in the area.

Group two was composed of the facilitators, six women and four men of, on average, sixty-seven years of age. All the participants besides the young Somali woman were Catholic. The project initiators sent out a request for volunteers to help with the mother-child dyads in doing school homework via the media. The people that volunteered were retired primary school teachers, men and women, born and raised in the area.

The project holders (group one) held a monthly workshop with the facilitators in order for the latter to express the problems and joys of working with their dyads and the teachers. They then attempted to provide the facilitators with solutions to the problems either in the form of tools

or rules. Furthermore, the project holders sought funding for the project and communicated with the media, school heads and politicians.

The facilitators (group two) interacted with the teachers (group three) on problems encountered and solutions found in their work with the mother-child dyad. Some mothers would speak of problems encountered with the teachers and it was the facilitators' role to improve upon the relation between the teaching community and the parents.

Teachers communicated the child's perceived learning or behavioural problems, either by short letters or verbally to the facilitators, and when situations were really tense they would call on the project initiators. If the problems were of a learning nature they would contact one of the special education initiators and if it was of an administrative nature they would contact the Swiss Immigrants Association. They often called the association to complain about the mothers.

## **2.2 Research questions**

Heitmeyer (1992) maintained that right-wing attitudes and political models that sustain these perspectives, produce "sociostructural, socio-interactive and individual processes of disintegration and that those factors are embedded in an ideology of inequality with an over-estimation of one's abilities, racism, eugenic division of worth and not-worth living, the thesis of natural hierarchies, stressing of the right of the stronger, unequal treatment of foreigners and others and violence appears as the means for solving conflicts" (Cattacin et al.,2006, p.13).

Reflecting on these studies, the studies presented in the literature review in chapter 1 and the ethnographic data accumulated, and as already argued, I maintain that a retooling of one's socio-political concepts of otherness to one that is more inclusive and expansive is a win-win situation for both nationals and foreigners alike. Retooling of one's socio-political concepts implies knowledge construction and development.

The theoretical approach adopted is that of the Cultural Historical Activity Theory. Knowledge construction is understood here as being a dialectical process activity (Vasilyuk, 1988) between the social world and human cognition mediated by historically collective



cultural artefacts. The study that follows explores the possibility of using a formative intervention methodology known as Change Laboratory (Engeström, 1987) in order to challenge and carry out concept level transformations, as a way of meeting societal needs in the Home-School project described above. The Change Laboratory method is described as being able to promote cross cultural learning (boundary crossing) and necessary forms of change. The changes are said to be necessary as without this the people implicated within the activities experience increasing levels of manifestations of their contradiction.

Leading on from the above reflections and the use of Change Laboratory methodology the question that arose is the following:

1) Can the categorisations of immigrant mothers, as developed by the members of the two groups within their social and political surroundings, change to include a more empathetic and expansive position towards the mothers (Tolman, 1981)? In other words are the participants able to break away from abstract categorisations to include concrete, elaborated conceptions of immigrant mothers and their children?

Developmental Work research and Cultural Historical Activity Theory has an acknowledged weakness (see Edwards & D'Arcy, 2004; Miettinen, 2005; Daniels, 2005; Roth & Lee, 2008; Engeström, 2009 and Lektorsky, 2009) in its understanding of subject positioning and in order to acknowledge the research participants' diversity this weakness needs to be overcome. This led to my second question:

2) Is it possible to articulate subject positioning within the Cultural Historical Activity Theoretical framework?

This chapter has presented the context within which the Home-School Change Laboratory took place. Immigrant populations in Switzerland are categorised by different residential permits that regulate their access to social institutions and zones of habitation. The ramifications of the residential permits permeate all social institutions and ways of life. The residential permits are translated into various degrees of exclusion by the mainstream population such as parental abilities to raise their children and to pursue their education. The project holders in their project proposition defined immigrant mothers and their children as

being problematic and as the source of teachers' distress; however, their conundrum is that Switzerland relies on cheap foreign labour and international coalition in order to maintain its population's high standard of living. The conundrum is the source of an experienced contradiction within the Home-School project. In the next chapter I shall present the methodology that I deemed capable of overcoming such a contradiction.

## CHAPTER 3      METHODOLOGY

The main motivation for my application of the chosen form of intervention research discussed within this chapter is that I did not want to limit my research to mere observations. I wanted to facilitate change, to alleviate conflict and tension and to contribute to the construction of a more expansive way of living in the world. I desired to facilitate development in order to overcome the historically embedded conundrums that were being manifested amongst the participants of the Home-School project and primarily to increase their possibility of perceiving immigrants as whole human beings that make a contribution to the society through their diversity rather than as human waste (Bauman, 2004).

I begin this chapter by briefly introducing different possibilities that exist generally in research and debate the methodological choice that I made to guide the empirical research that took place within this thesis, that of Developmental Work Research and Change Laboratory methodology developed by Yrjö Engeström (1987) and his colleagues in Helsinki. Furthermore, the section builds an argument to illustrate Engeström's (1987) unique interpretation of the works of Vygotsky (1987), Leontiev (1978) and Bateson (1972). I argue that this unique interpretation could as well have been developed to include a perspective of individual-collective human development or subject positioning (Daniels, 2005) as experiencing (Vasilyuk, 1988). The debate that the inclusion of this perspective opens up the possibility of understanding development not only through its material production but as well through its psychological manifestations in discursive actions begins in this chapter, it follows in chapter 4 and concludes in chapter 5. Achieving this analytical shift, I claim is paramount when using Change Laboratory methodology to facilitate change and empowerment amongst the disempowered. Despite Engeström's claim (1987; 1999) that Developmental Work Research and its Change Laboratory methodology are capable of transforming human activities and overcoming internal contradictions, its use has been underplayed in empowering the disempowered until now.

The concepts of research validity, reliability, transferability and generalisability and how they are articulated within this thesis are then discussed. Linked to these concepts is the very important concept of addressing ethical issues when carrying out research and when

presenting the findings to a wider public. Ethical guidelines and ethical committees are an important contribution to the protection of human and animal lives. The ethical issues linked to conducting intervention research in the sensitive socio-political context in which this study took place, could not be neglected. Moreover, I then tentatively address the impact that my being an immigrant and a facilitator in the project could have had upon the outcome of this study.

The chapter terminates with my presentation of the Home-School Change Laboratory carried out as part of this study to illustrate the method of research. This was done in order to reduce the methodological and analytical sections of this manuscript. However, the data presented was chosen out of a much larger bank of data in order to maintain coherence and focus within the study. That is to say that a large bank of data focused on structural transformations. Discussions and conflicts around the topic of the *mothers' integration* however increased as the sessions progressed. The choice of data was made in order to answer the two research questions posited in this study.

### **3.1 Why intervention research**

Non-experimental research designs are best suited to describe contexts, to describe people or to explain patterns of cultural behaviour and are not overtly directed to facilitating change. This type of research does not have a comparative group or object and does not manipulate the situation in order to determine an outcome. Survey, correlation, synchronic, ethnographic case study and cross-sectional survey research are examples of non-experimental research and when using these methods, random sampling is an important factor. Researchers study topics such as household uses, cases of dementia in populations, shifting trends in societies such as violence, discrimination etc. and cultural behaviour. Methods such as interviews, questionnaires, observations and telephone surveys are common forms of non-experimental research methods and data can be qualitative, quantitative or a mixture of both. Despite the important contribution of the in-depth data acquired, some difficulties are encountered such as: confounding between variables; bias on behalf of the researcher; drawing inferences; social desirability bias and the cost incurred in longitudinal studies. Research programs are often left at the descriptive or the predictive stage and the problems observed are recorded, never developing interventions that could possibly directly and sustainably reduce human suffering

(see Figure 3.1 below). However, this type of research can be useful as a precursor to intervention research.

Experimental research on the other hand is used when the researcher attempts to determine causality between two variables. The advantage of this type of study is that the results hold strong evidence for cause and effect. Disadvantages are that they: are sometimes high in cost; may not reflect *real life*; they are difficult to design well and may contain observer bias. There are also ethical issues involved and participants consent in the experiment needs to be obtained once all the parameters of the research have been clearly explained to them. Despite such precautions experimental research has often been misused.

Intervention research in institutions and organisations is on the rise due to the increasing complexity and ambiguities of the work place and human societies (Engeström, 2009), one of the factors being the amplification of human migration. “The increasingly societal nature of work processes, their internal complexity and interconnectedness as well as their massive volumes in capital and capacity, are making it evident that, at least in periods of acute disturbance or intensive change, no one actually quite masters the work activity as a whole, though the control and planning of the whole is formally in the hands of the management. This creates what may be called ‘grey zones’, areas of vacuum or ‘no man’s land’, where initiative and determined action from practically any level of the corporate hierarchy may have unexpected effects” (Engeström, 1987, pp.113–114).

The Home-School project certainly had *grey zones* (the covert objective of the project) and definitely areas that were *no man’s land* (the non-desire of immigrant populations in Switzerland). The Home-School project did have a hierarchical distribution of tasks but the real management was not apparent and took the form of the politicians in office and directors of the educational culture and sport department. In order to overcome critical periods of life or ruptures in workplaces, workplace development needs to take place and intervening in the process requires a particular type of intervention. The research of this thesis was carried out within a voluntary organization whose objective was *the assimilation of migrant and refugee mothers into the mainstream society as the only perceived possibility of improving on their children’s school performance*. Assimilation refers to giving up one’s former ways of doing things and taking on those of the new society. If the mothers had desired to give up their

previous socio-cultural ways why had they not already done so? Is it ethical to require people to abandon their ancestral beliefs when it is not causing bodily or psychological harm to others? However natural the process is for human beings to make sense of the environment through the construction of categorisations, “it is ultimately we who draw the boundaries, and people coming from different cultures and from different philosophical traditions can and do draw them differently” (Ollman, 2003, p.13). Categorisations of immigrant groups by residential permits served the purpose of social sense making, of identifying who the person is without searching any further. The ‘either or’ solution found in the use of an assimilation model for immigrants did not appear to be producing peaceful and healthy parameters and I questioned (see chapter 1) whether there was another possibility such as one in which mainstream and immigrant populations both revisit their beliefs and customs, a possibility demonstrated in the Canadian approach to immigrants (see chapter 1). Due to the complexity of my question, I deemed it relevant to make use of an intervention research approach as the other forms above are not designed to facilitate the transformation of historically produced ways of being.

### *3.1.1 Intervention research, various concepts and forms*

Midgley (2000) defined intervention as that purposeful action designed to create change. The word intervention in Latin means literally to come in between and although human beings naturally intervene in situations and life processes the following forms of intervention refer to deliberate planned forms of intervention that have a method and are based on a theory. There are several forms of intervention and in order to choose which one was needed to change the intolerable situation. I heeded the advice posited by Menon (2012) who maintains that intervention research needs to remain attentive to culture, race, ethnicity and gender concerns and that not every design is appropriate.

A well known form of intervention research that combines both research and development is that of Action research designed by Kurt Lewin in the 1940’s. He argued that it was necessary to both change individuals everyday way of understanding matters and at the same time to resolve societal dilemmas. Within this method, researchers gather information about the problem and then lead the participants to experiment with, test and assess other ways of acting. Lewin (1947b, 1943) coined his approach as “social engineering” and “planned change” (p. 34). It was important that a third party requested the intervention to take place and

defined the problem that was to be resolved. His approach consisted of three levels of change: unfreezing the present habit of the group, moving it to a new level and freezing it once more at the new level. The problem with the approach of planned change is that the researcher interventionist is responsible for delineating the problem to be addressed in the intervention as well as the grounds upon which it is based (Virkkunen & Newnham, *in press*). Moreover, he or she chooses a precise moment when the change has been achieved and the intervention stops. Such a non-agentive initiative would have been poorly viewed by the project holders in the context described in chapter 2.

Mazurek Melnyk, Morrison-Beedy and Moore (2012) propose a “five-phase development sequence of experimental or intervention research”, which begins with searching for “variables that may be amenable to intervention or in which the content, strength, and timing of the intervention are developed, along with the outcome measures for the study” (p.41). The second phase is determined by a small scale study in which the intervention is tested, trials are run and then the intervention/ experiment ends with an evaluation of the effects and possibility of wide-scale implementation. This method, which draws on Clinical research, (Marcia, 1997) suffers from much of the same problems as Action research. Furthermore, in this method the research is the starting point and the healing of an ailment is secondary therefore the interventionist has all the power and directs the study top down from beginning to end.

A third form of intervention research that developed had, as its main objective, the implementation of existing concepts or models in the organisation, usually in the form of technological software. These concept-driven change interventions (see Kotter, 1996) involve all levels of the organisation and all its functions. Most of these kinds of interventions are based on, or are similar to, Kurt Lewin’s *social engineering* approach. Long (2001) criticised these models as being linear, plan, execution and outcome based. They tend to disregard the need for communication, negotiation and collaboration. They ignore that people interpret external change impulses from the perspective of their own interests, motives and plans.

These models of intervention then were not appropriate for the problem with which the project holders were confronted as, by being top down, they lacked sensitivity to the cultural

environment out of which the problem arose. An intervention process should rather be understood as being complex, multifaceted and social in nature, where the unexpected needs to be apprehended and guided to a desired novel form of working (Beer, Eisenstat & Spencer, 1990). Intervention needs to be “an on-going transformational process that is constantly reshaped by its own internal organisational and political dynamic and by the specific conditions it encounters or itself creates, including the responses and strategies of local and regional groups who may struggle to define and defend their own social spaces, cultural boundaries and positions within the wider power field.” (Long, 2001, p.27). Furthermore, Long (2001) invokes the need to work with factors of struggle, power and boundaries which are rarely utilised in linear intervention models such as those mentioned above. Design research is, in certain ways, similar to intervention research as at a certain moment in the construction of new ways of doing things and making sense of things, design is necessary.

However, as in intervention research, the unit of analysis in design research has moved from the individual to the entire learning environment or dynamic learning environments (Barab & Kirshner, 2001). Unfortunately, in most design research the actual elements needed to make up the unit remained vague and unpredictable. Engeström (2008) states that if design researchers do not “specify and model the crucial components and relations of their proposed units of analysis, a decisive connection between theory and methodology is severed” (p.3). Despite Middleton, Gorard, Taylor and Bannan-Ritland’s (2008) claim that “design experiments are valuable methodological additions to the standard procedures that already include randomised controlled trials and other traditional experimental studies” (p.42), the inbuilt linear view of many of the actual models ignore what we know of interventions as consisting of “contested terrains, full of resistance, reinterpretation and surprises from the actors below” (Engeström, 2008, p.13).

Beer and Nohria (2000) purport that there exist two dramatically different contemporary approaches to organisational change; these are theories ‘E’ and ‘O’. Theory E implements change from the top and it is planned and programmatic as well as being economically driven. Theory ‘O’ focuses on the “development of the organisation’s human capability to implement strategy and to learn from actions taken about the effectiveness of changes made” (Beer and Nohria, 2000, p.3), and change is understood as being emergent. These two perspectives of



change together ensconce a use-value exchange-value contradiction and Beer and Nohria suggest that “(w)here the objective is to enable an institution to adapt, survive, and prosper in the long run, Theory E must be combined with Theory O” (p.20). While contradictions, ruptures and contested terrain are notions that are used within these theoretical approaches, they are not defined as involving a mutual relationship but remain as external manifestations. That is to say, they are defined as being outside of the activity and without a history within the activity, thereby neglecting the anchoring of contradictions to a specific system and a concrete historical situation (Engeström & Sannino, 2010).

Due to the sensitivity of the Home-School project topic, I preferred to adopt a position in which the chosen research design included the possibility of unintended consequences and movements in unexpected ways. Thus, instead of pushing grand designs through at any cost, we might cultivate tentative solutions by means of experimentation, first locally and, when working solutions are found, by generalising and spreading them through dialogue and further experimentation (Virkkunen & Newnham, inpress)

In other words an intervention research that can deal with the unknown, the unpredictable and the participants’ agentive implication in redesigning their own work is one that acknowledges open ended continually reworked models of intervention. The former mentioned models suffer from a weak unit of analysis where the design is depicted in a linear fashion, starting with “researchers determining the principles and goals and leading to completion or perfection... and seems blind to the crucial difference between finished mass products and open-ended social innovations, as well as between designer-led and user-led models of innovation process” (Engeström, 2008, p.5). And finally as in the research conducted by Mazurek Melnyk et al. (2012) a variable-oriented approach to research is “tacitly endorsed, without questioning the underlying problematic notion of causality” (Engeström, 2008, p.5).

Developmental Work Research, another type of intervention/ design research, was developed by Engeström (1987) in order to overcome the former mentioned difficulties. It is consequently this methodology which I adopted in this thesis, also, due to its possibility to

facilitate transformation of historically created concepts or categorisations in terrains that are contested, resist change and need agentic internal transformation.

### 3.1.2 Formative intervention as embodied in Developmental Work Research

A formative interventionist methodology does not only have a research motive and objective. It is also used in order to transform workplaces or organisations that are experiencing strong internal conflicts and frustrations. In Figure 3.1 formative interventions are *transforming experiments* where the transformation is agentially constructed by the research participants and is moderate in size, highly creative and dynamic.

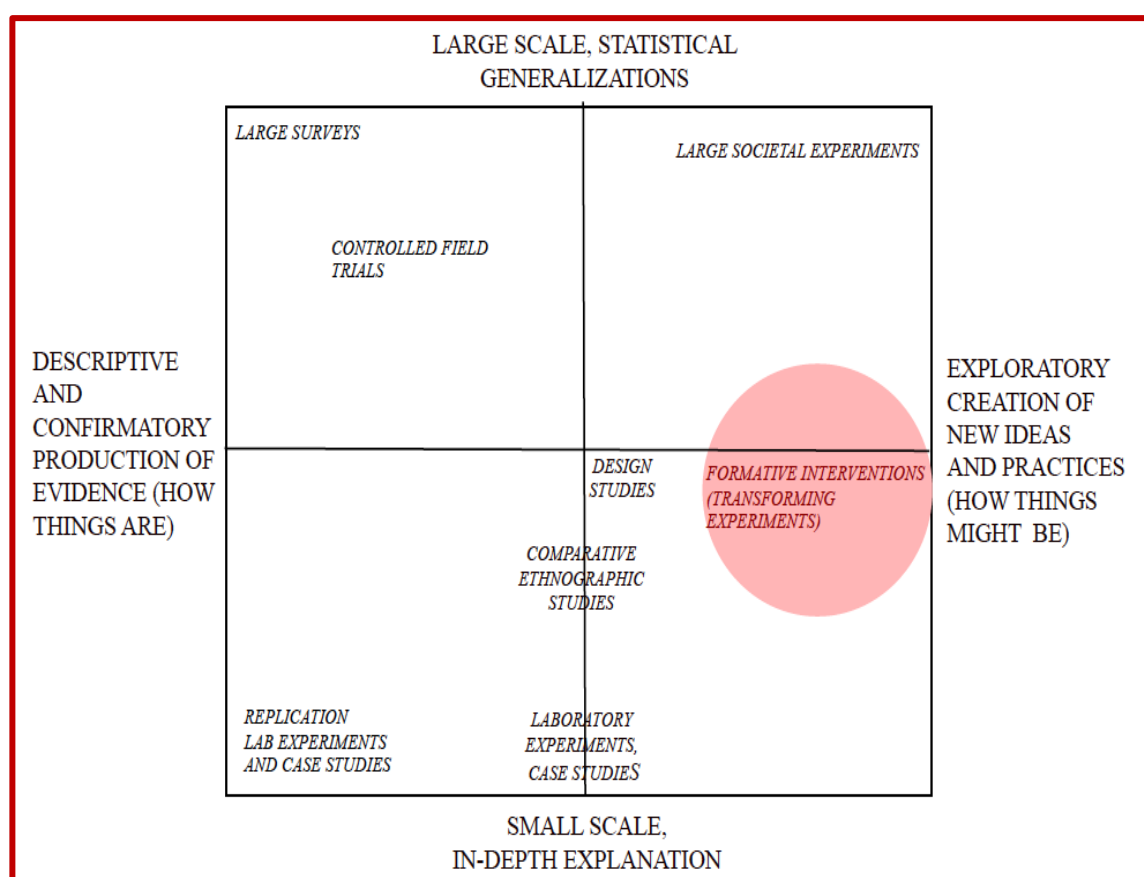


Figure 3.1 Formative interventions in the field of research in social sciences  
(Engeström, *in press*)

Furthermore, in relation to Dewey's distinction between absolutist and experimental thinking, Engeström (2007) suggests a distinction between stabilising categorisation knowledge and dynamic possibility knowledge which is central to the approach taken within this study. Possibility knowledge opens up insights into what may be possible in a human activity and

what alternative directions of development and change are available. Possibilities are not given; they are created and articulated by those whose lives are at stake. “Possibility knowledge is generated by setting the activity and its subjects into motion, into some form of *focused time travel* that explores the past, the present and the future in relation to one another. Such modes of engaged world-making are rarely captured without deliberate intervention” (Engeström, inpress, p.xvii). Possibility knowledge is the opposite of abstract knowledge or fossilised knowledge (see discussion in chapter 1) which uses categorisations without questioning their sources or consequences. Possibility knowledge questions reality and proposes creative solutions to problems.

Formative intervention methodology provokes the participants to engage with possibility knowledge during embodiment in a Change Laboratory process. More precisely the methodology was designed in order to study and intervene in the process of change in activity systems. In comparison to other developmental approaches in research, for example the Clinical Laboratory of Yves Clos (see for example 2004), it adopts the position instead that learning is a process that transmits and preserves culture, expansive learning transforms and creates culture; rather than seeing learning as a process of vertical improvement along some uniform scale of competence, the learning process is seen as a horizontal movement of exchange and hybridisation between different cultural contexts and standards of competence; and finally, rather than a learning process of acquiring and creating empirical knowledge and concepts, it is a process that leads to the formation of theoretical knowledge and concepts. Formative intervention and the facilitation of possibility knowledge are grounded in Engeström’s seminal work published in 1987, *Developmental Work research and Change Laboratory methodology*.

### **3.2 Discussion on Developmental Work Research and Change Laboratory methodology**

Cultural Historical Activity Theory has its roots in the works of Lev Semenovitch Vygotsky (1866-1934). After his participation in the second psycho-neurology congress in 1924, in which the topic of consciousness and behaviourism was central, Vygotsky proposed to rather understand consciousness as a higher psychological function which is social and cultural in origin. Seen in this way consciousness does not have its origin in the relations to the world or to others but rather in the internalisation of cultural instruments with which the individual is

interacting and which function as internal stimuli. In other words, instead of being a stimulus response (S-R) formula it became a triadic formula composed of Subject-Tool-Object. In his elaboration of this thesis he identified two forms of stimuli; technical instruments that are oriented towards the world and psychological instruments which are oriented towards the subject (Vygotsky, 1939/1985). Vygotsky studied how thought interconnected with signs and the world in human development. Consciousness is therefore semiotic and, following the works of Spinoza, he translated consciousness as being the idea of the idea. In this way thoughts need signs in order to appropriate language as instruments of thought and development. Consciousness, Vygotsky (1924/2003) claimed is the social contact with oneself.

In the middle of the 1930's Leontiev (one of Vygotsky's scholars and the main translator of his works) transformed the original Cultural Historical theory developed by Vygotsky (1978). Kozulin (1998) explains the difference between these two theories: Vygotsky's theory focused on the development of higher mental functions "as a subject of study, semiotic systems as mediators, and activity as an explanatory principle" (p.45), whereas within Leontiev's theory, activity and the actions therein are inseparable and play all roles from subject to explanatory principle. In other words the emphasis of their theories is on opposite poles of a continuum. Internalisation, to Vygotsky, took place through the individual's interaction with technical instruments which are oriented towards the world and psychological instruments which are oriented towards the subject. Whilst Vygotsky accentuates the semiotic aspect of mediation, Leontiev placed his emphasis on the material outcome (Kaptelinin, 2005).

Leontiev (1981) explicated the crucial difference between an individual action and a collective activity. He emphasised that it is through the relation with other human beings and their collective consciousness articulated towards the transformation of nature by means of tools that are adapted through this process, that the development of higher mental functions may be observed. Leontiev (1978) illustrated his concept of individual operations, actions and motive within an activity through a *primeval collective hunt*. Operations are carried out without conscious awareness. The operation is not driven by a conscious orientation to an objective but is rather a part of the behaviour necessary to make an action possible. Actions are therefore carried out with conscious awareness of purpose. The relationship between the three

levels: operations, actions and activity are dialectical. The means found within the operations determine what kind of objectives can be set and an individual's action may not be correctly interpreted by an outsider's observation unless the collective activity is understood. Additionally, the individual cannot interpret his or her individual actions without situating them within the collective context of the activity. Furthermore, the same action or operation may have different meanings in different activity systems (Daniels, Leadbetter, Soares & Macnab, 2006), and the same action can serve different activities (Leontiev, 1978). The analysis of such systems requires a continual movement between the individual actions to the collective actions and back again as well as from the reality to the ideal. Leontiev (1978), in his example of the *primeval hunt*, stressed the historical transformations of the structure of individual activities rather than that of collective activities as is interpreted by Engeström in his works (see Vasilyuk, 1992 for individual use of Leontiev as well as my discussion on this topic in chapter 5 of this thesis). Additionally, Leontiev did not study multiple voices or polyphony (Bakhtin, 1981; Engeström, 2005), as found within the third generation of activity systems as proposed by Engeström (Lektorsky, 2009).

Engeström was influenced by several scholars besides those mentioned above. Davydov (1988, 1990) and his colleagues developed the collective aspect of activity further, to include the notion that “internalisation can be understood as a mode of individual appropriation of forms of collective activity” and “presupposes constant communication between participants as a necessary condition” (Lektorsky, 2009, p.77). Additionally Engeström (1987) added the perspectives of value and norms.

Engeström (1987) alleges that Developmental Work Research is derived from the works of Leontiev and Vygotsky however a closer look (see discussion on object below and chapter 5) reveals that his theory is rather unique and original as he takes several novel side steps by placing his theoretical propositions firstly in the collective subject and structure, secondly within the workplace, and then in the development of the adult. He interpreted the primeval hunt as being the representation of a collective activity where the actions of the individual (small group) are investigated and not an individual person, as within Leontiev's work. He represented the primeval hunt as shown in Figure 3.2 below.

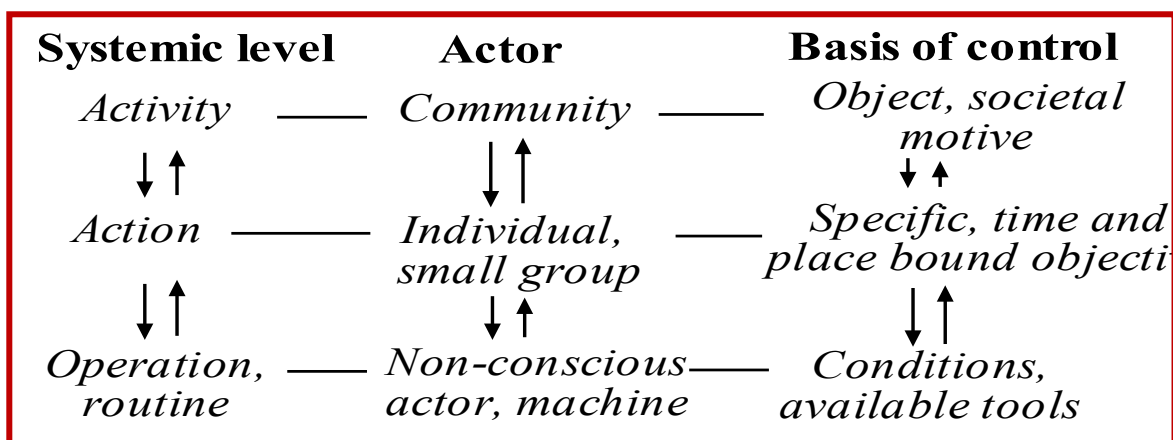


Figure 3.2 Engeström's interpretation of Leontiev's 1978 primeval hunt: "the proposed hierarchical structure of activity" (1987, pp.153-154).

In this way he created a new conception of activity and a new understanding of its structure designed to solve new problems (Lektorsky, 2009, p.79). The uniqueness of his design relies on his multivoiced perspective, on interaction between collective activity systems that contain communities sharing multiple points of view and traditions. Activities are historically overwhelmed by cumulative contradictions which are sources of conflict and double binds that are resolved through questioning, of ascending from the abstract to the concrete and back again whilst designing a new activity. Through this process it is possible to study collective material development and change or production. Engeström's (1999, p.22) argument that development should only be understood through the transformation of individual actions to collective actions negates reducing human activity to the level of individual actions, as was done by Leontiev (1978), which he said, eradicates the societal and cultural nature of activity. He represented his theoretical perspective in the activity triangle (Figure 3.3 below) in which each nodule of the activity system contains Leontiev's three levels of human functioning.

The definitions of the activity system's nodes are as follows:

Subject: the individual/subgroup chosen as the point of view in the analysis and that works on transforming the object.

Tools: physical or psychological, which mediate between the subject and the environment.

Community: individuals/subgroups who share the same general object as the subject.

Division of labour: division of tasks between members of the community.

Rules: explicit or implicit regulations, norms and conventions that constrain action/interaction.

Object: the ‘raw material’ or problem space at which the activity is directed and which is moulded or transformed into outcomes.

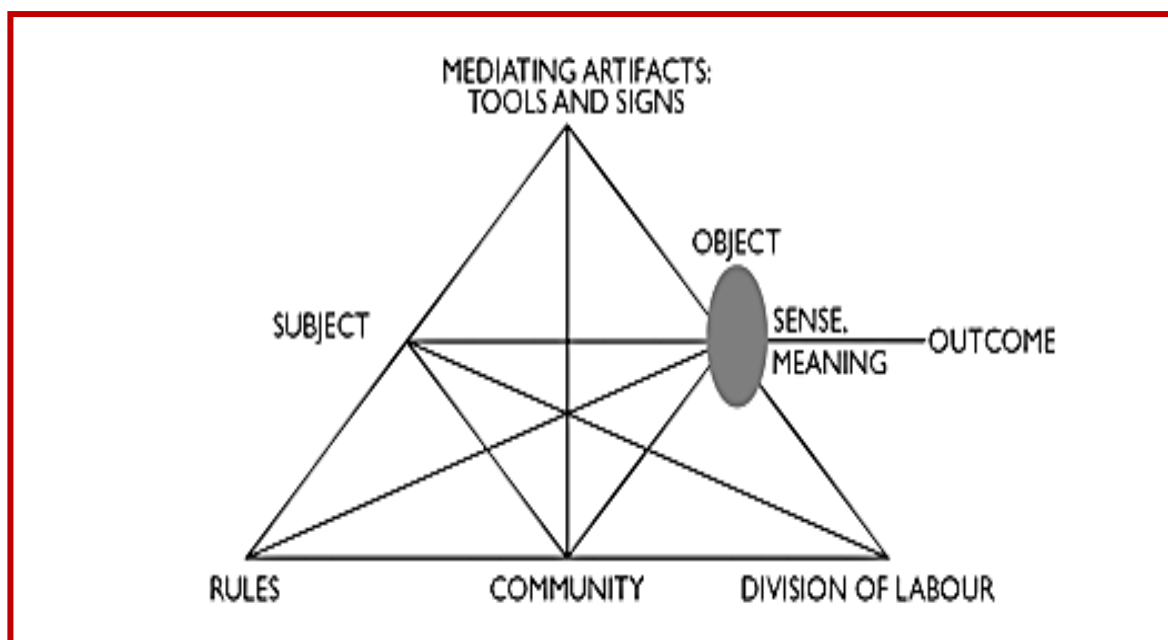


Figure 3.3 The structure of the human activity system (Engeström, 1987)

Cole (1996/2003) noted that Engeström later designed the model and theoretical approach of the third generation (see. Figure 3.4 below) of the activity system as being interacting activity systems with a partially shared object. This was perceived as a necessary evolution since the single activity system could not engage with the complexities of multivoicedness and interacting activities found within and between levels of institutions. Within the new model, two activity systems expand from objects 1 to 2 within a dialogue. This expansion depicts both objects and outcome as partially overlapping, but never completely engulfing. In this cross-border object exchange a new object 3 appears that gives rise to a seed of transformation, or germ cell. In other words, the newly-appeared third object gives rise to a driving force for the transformation of the original activity system through feedback to the respective activity systems (Engeström, 2001).

The difference between the single activity system and multiple networking of systems is the elaboration of multiple perspectives and voices of interacting, networking systems where the minimum requirement is two activity systems.

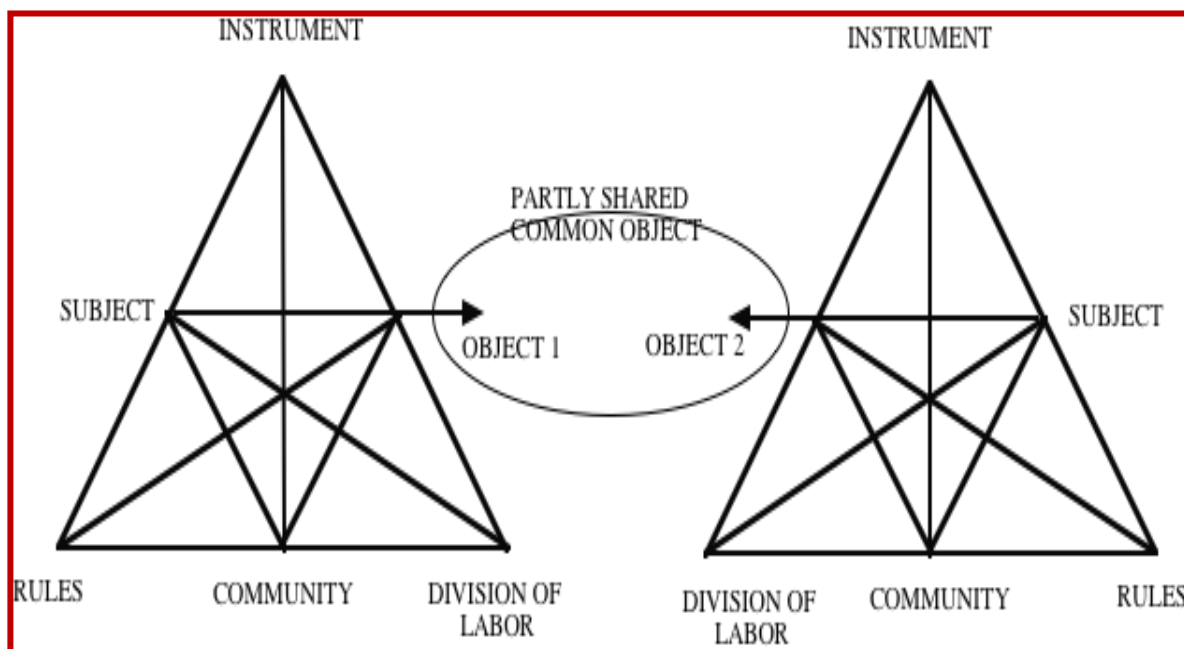


Figure 3.4 The third generation of Activity theory (Engeström, 2000)

The following sections will elaborate on three theoretical areas concerning activity systems which are relevant within the analytical section of this thesis: 1) the object of activity, 2) mediation and the subject of activity, 3) change and development in activity systems.

### 3.2.1 The object of an activity

There are several uses and definitions of the object of an activity which, states Kaptelinin (2005) has undermined its practical use. The roots of which are found in the words of Leontiev (1959/1981) who wrote “(a)ccordingly, I will limit the meaning of ‘object’. Usually this concept has two meanings: in a broad sense, it is a thing related to other things, that is, a thing having an existence, in a more narrow sense it is something that opposes..., something that resists..., something at which an action is directed..., that is, something to which a living creature is somehow related, as an object of his or her activity, no matter if this activity is an external one or an internal one (for example, ‘the object of eating’, ‘the object of labour’, ‘the object of contemplation’, etc.). From now on the term ‘object’ will be used in this narrower, special meaning” (p.51).

Engeström’s (1987) definition of the object of activity and that of Leontiev’s (1981) differ. Firstly, Leontiev spoke of the individual’s activity and object as being the unit of analysis. He did however state that the activity in this sense “must not be considered as isolated from social



relations, from the life of society” (1978, p.51). Although his concept of activity could be used at the organisational level he made use of it in the narrow sense, at the individual level and the “entirety of life processes of a concrete individual, a human being, was deemed an overarching context for activities (including actions and operations), and not the other way around” (Kaptelinin, 2005, p.9).

The following description of the object of an activity is taken from the various works of Engeström. Engeström (1987, 1990, and 1999) developed the activity system as a collective both at the level of the structure (workplace) and form (subject). The object is defined as a raw material or a problem space on which the subject of the activity is working and which is being transformed into the outcome. The most important element of the activity is the object which the subject (those working on the object) interact with and wish to transform through the use of tools. The object gives the activity its motive. “An object is both something given and something projected, anticipated and constructed. An entity of the outside world becomes an object of activity as it meets the human need” (Teras, 2007, p.39). Furthermore, the object of an activity is collective. The object moves from an initial state of unreflected, situationally given raw material (object 1: a migrant mother is categorised as an immigrant and a drain on the mainstream society) to a collectively meaningful object constructed by the activity system (object 2: a mother that has left her entire socio-cultural world behind), and to a potentially shared or jointly constructed object (object 3: a collaboratively constructed understanding of the mother’s life situations and a revision of these as being possible socio-cultural contributors to, and whole human beings within, the mainstream society). The transformation of the object above is not linear and can take surprising turns as the actors make sense, name, stabilise, represent and enact foci for their actions and activities, they have histories and built-in affordances, they resist and *bite back* (Engeström & Blackler, 2005). Therefore, the object of activity is a moving target, not reducible to conscious short-term goals and as such never finite. Therefore, objects are not static but continually transforming and at times elusive. This is because the object, human or material adheres to its own properties and laws which make it difficult to control.

The elusiveness of the object becomes even more accentuated between several activity systems (see boundary crossing below) due to its multiple roles. Engeström and Escalante (1996) maintain that “(o)bjects do not exist for us in themselves, directly and without

mediation. We relate to objects by means of other objects...this means that objects appear in two fundamentally different roles: as objects (*Gegenstand*) and as mediating artefacts or tools. There is nothing in the material makeup of an object as such that would determine which one it is: object or tool. The constellation of the activity determines the place and meaning of the object” (pp.361-362). By highlighting the dual nature of the object as both material and ideal what emerges is a notion of the object as containing within it both the *what* (for example, integration of migrant and refugee mothers) and the *why* ( in order to improve on their children’s school performance) of the activity. Engeström (1995) suggests that, as with all other nodules of the activity system, the object should be viewed as an activity of its own and every transformation of the object, or any other nodule, will consequently have an impact on the rest of the activity's nodules. This is illustrated by means of the Figure 3.5 below.

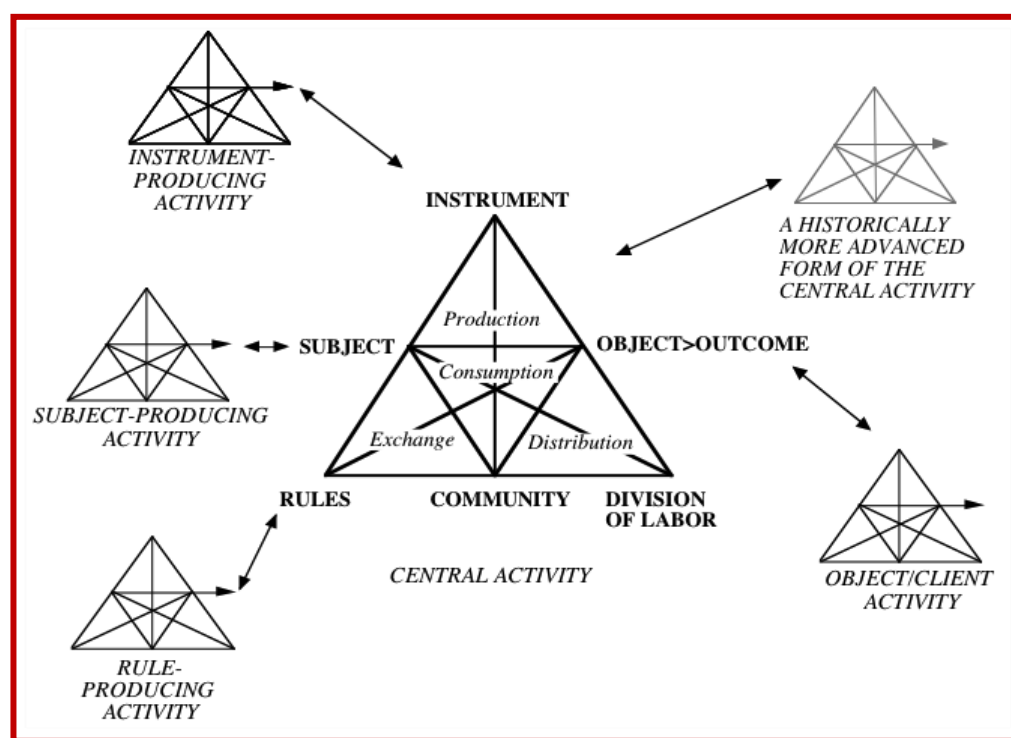


Figure 3.5 Related Activity systems (Engeström, 1995)

Engeström and Sannino (2010) wrote that “the object is both resistant raw material and the future-oriented purpose of an activity. The object is the true carrier of the motive of the activity. Thus, in expansive learning activity, motives and motivation are not sought primarily inside individual subjects – they are in the object to be transformed and expanded....motives cannot be taught, they can only be nurtured by developing ‘the content of actual vital

relations' of the learners"(p.4). The motive is the why of the activity and the outcome is the result.

I propose to use the dual status of the object both as a projection of the world onto the human mind and a projection of the human mind onto the world which affords the possibility of using it as a conceptual lens that anchors the "contextualising subjective phenomena in the objective world, and changes one's perspective on both the mind and the world. Instead of being a collection of 'mental processes', the human mind emerges as biased, striving for meaning and value, suffering and rejoicing, failing and hoping, alive, real. On the other hand, the world is no longer just a collection of physical bodies, organisational structures, and so forth but a place full of meaning and value, a place that can be conformable or dangerous, restricting or supporting, beautiful or ugly, or (as it is often the case) all of these at the same time" (Kaptelinin, 2005, p.5). In this sense the object of the activity enables the researcher to conceptualise not only what people are doing but why they are doing it. Kaptelinin (2005) refers to it as the *sense maker* the analysis takes a form of reaching deeper into the meaning and motive behind the activity in a more structured way.

Furthermore, my interpretation of the contradictions and complexities of the object of the Home-School project includes three states of the object as proposed by Miettinen (2005):

"(a) the object of the activity as simultaneously epistemic and practical; (b) the object of activity as a commodity, that is, as a contradictory unity of use value and exchange value: and finally (c) the object of activity as a heterogeneous or functionally complex system consisting of different material... social" (p.58) and psychological entities.

### 3.2.2 *Mediation and subject of activity*

Engeström (1999, pp.28-29) purports to having overcome the conundrum of individual-collective through the notion of mediation, developed by Vygotsky (1978). Individual actions are socially mediated towards the object together with other members of the community that are working on the same object. Using the same reasoning, a collective subject is also an active agent with its own "aims, interests, memory, and norms". The individual and collective become interconnected through mediation as the individual mediates with other individuals through collective cultural tools. All scholars do not agree with this approach and Lektorsky (2009) maintains that despite the important contributions to studying adult development, "an

individual subject cannot be dissolved into the system of collective activity” (p.80) as the individual is a “specific system of its own” and needs to be perceived as having attributes of free will and can refuse to adhere to certain societal and cultural rules and norms and create others of his or her own. Akkerman, Admiraal, Simons and Niessen (2006) proposed to see project members as being a collective individualism where each individual has his or her own life history and where they should be working collectively towards a common object in which their diversity is accepted as being new. However, forms of mediation can be seen as being situated at different degrees of acceptability on a continuum of rules found within an activity.

### 3.2.3 Change as an expansive process of a collective activity system

Change then, in Developmental Work Research, is stimulated by the collective subject’s need.

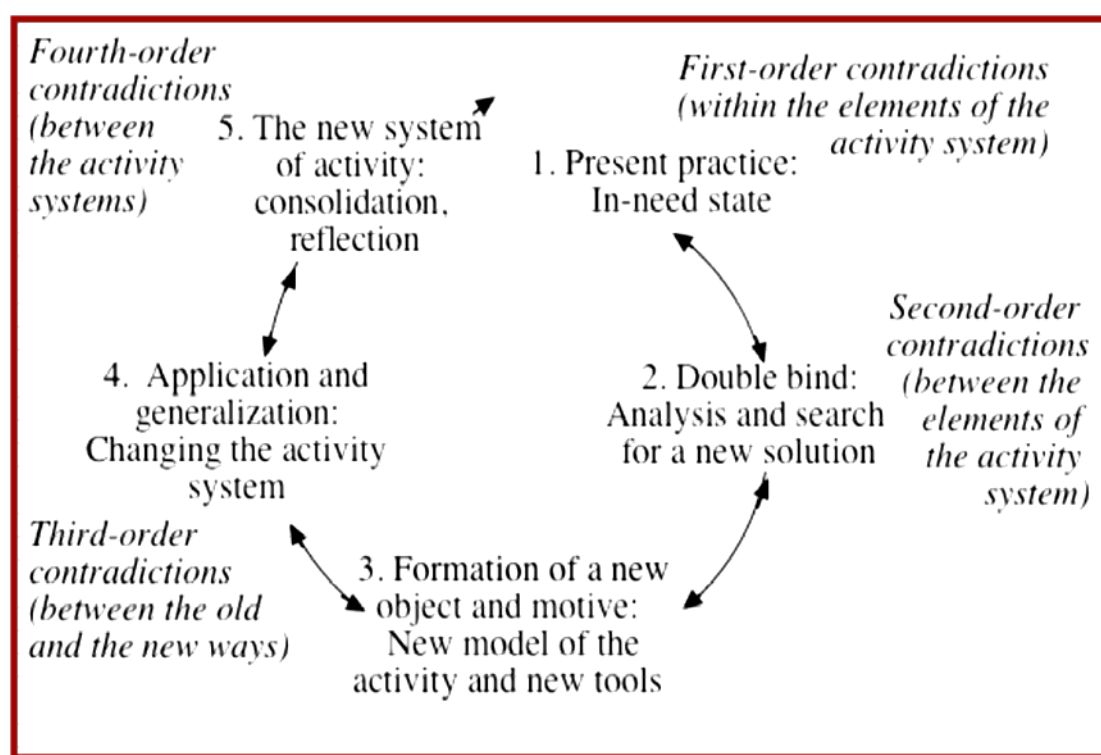


Figure 3.6 Phases of a cycle of expansive learning and transformation of an activity system and manifestations of contradictions

The need arises due to the system’s inner contradictions that create tension between the different nodes of the activity. Change is therefore the subjects’ overcoming of their contradictions by finding new ways to proceed. However, this process does not contain a one-off solution. There are four different types of contradictions that depend on the phase of reflection of the subjects on their activity (Lektorsky, 2009). The different contradictions are indicated within Figure 3.6 above.

Primary or first order contradictions arise out of the use value-exchange value of the activity system as a whole. It is impossible to totally eradicate the primary contradiction of an activity but every transformation at any level of the activity is understood as a way of containing this contradiction. The second order contradiction develops between the nodules of the activity as these are transforming in unsynchronised ways and in different directions. The third order contradictions develop between historical ways of dealing with the activity and the new ways that are emerging. They are at their strongest in the beginning phases of the new design. The fourth order contradictions become present when the new activity is criticised by its surrounding activities.

The subject is often unaware that the tensions and emotional ruptures experienced within the activity are due to double-bind situations aggravated by the system's inner contradictions. Engeström (2001) maintained that in order to break away from such inherent tension the interventionist of a Change Laboratory requires an understanding of the activity's Zone of Proximal Development. Vygotsky (1978) devised the concept in order to illustrate the developmental space between what the child is able to achieve on his or her own and the level of achievement acquired with the help of an adult. One of the most important aspects of the Zone of Proximal Development is to understand that it describes functions that are not yet visible (Robbins, 2003). Moreover, it is not to be seen as a transfer of knowledge and ways of performing from a more knowledgeable other to a novice, but rather as a "collaborative use of mediational means to create, obtain, and communicate meaning" (Moll & Gonzalez, 1994, p.96). Chaiklin (2003) differed in his opinion from these scholars and argued that the Zone of Proximal Development refers to the maturing means to perform in collaborative situations that could not be achieved without external aid and that these functions are not created during the child's interaction with the other but it is rather the interaction which provides conditions for identifying their existence and the level of their development. Engeström (1987), using this concept as an analogy, introduced the notion of the Zone of Proximal Development into that of the development of a collective activity system and stated that in this case the Zone of Proximal Development "is the distance between the present everyday actions of the individuals and the historically new form of the societal activity that can be collectively generated as a solution of the double bind potentially embedded in the everyday actions" (p. 174). The Zone of Proximal Development here is defined as that space between individual

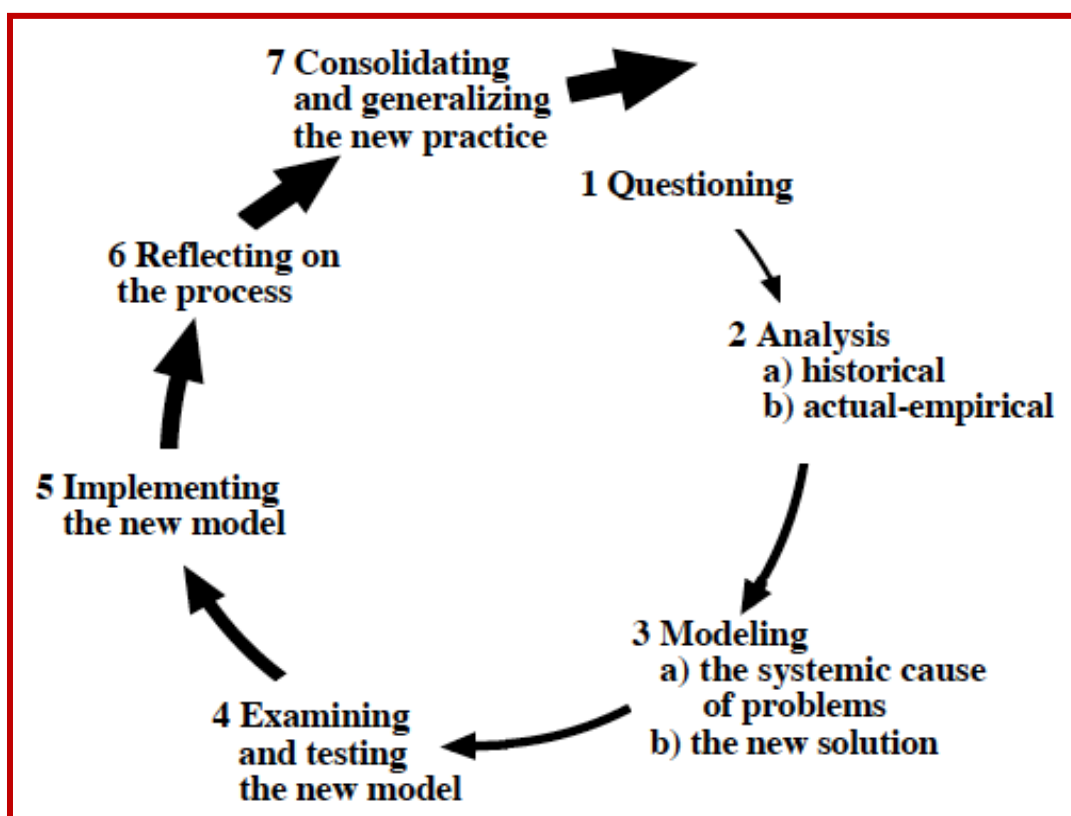
actions and the collective binding of the subject around their new work object by overriding the limitations set by historically created contradictions. His contribution is once again a combination of several scholars' theories as well as his own. Moreover, Vygotsky (1987) was referring to a maturing child where part of that maturation is biological. On the other hand Engeström is referring to mature adults involved within a material activity.

Furthermore, an activity system cannot be transformed in any way as it is intertwined with the structures of a society and other activities. Transformation begins with the evaluation of the need state of the activity and propositions for transformation need to remain realistic. Therefore, it is essential to study and to determine what the inner contradiction of the system is and what the realistic possibilities for further development are, that is, for an expansive perspective-opening solution to the current contradictions. In all situations there is more than one possibility, that is to say, a Zone of Proximal Development within which possibilities of further development lie. However, the process of transformation needs to remain collective and while the historical contextual analysis is undertaken by the interventionist, it might not be the way forward for the practitioners. As each individual only partially sees the object and the structural system of the joint activity, an expansive solution that opens a perspective for future development, collaborative analysis and development is needed. A broader view can be created when the practitioners temporarily distance themselves from their daily work, analyse the problems and the systemic causes and begin transforming the system together. To do that, they have to take specific actions of inquiry, learning and design; that is, expansive learning actions.

The principal types of expansive learning actions are illustrated in Figure 3.7 below and are explained as follows (Engeström, 2008):

- 1) Questioning (a question) involves criticisms and rejections of the ways of thinking and working within the actual activity.
- 2) Analysing (a why question) the situation consists of mental, discursive or practical transformations of the situation in order to discover explanatory causes or mechanisms. There are two types of analysis, the historical-genetic which seeks to explain the situation by tracing its origination and evolution and the actual empirical analysis which seeks to explain the situation by constructing a picture of its inner systemic relations.

- 3) Modelling takes place in some publicly observable and transmittable form by working on the newly found relationship that explains the problematic situation or on a new idea that offers a solution to the situation.
- 4) Testing the newly created model within a conservative space.
- 5) Examining the model of the new solution involves experimenting on the model's value and utility by putting it into practice.
- 6) Implementing the model which requires practical application, elaboration and evaluation of the process.
- 7) Reflecting on and evaluating the process.
- 8) Finally, consolidating the outcomes of the process into a new, stable form of practice.



*Figure 3.7 The ideal-typical cycle of expansive learning (Engeström, 2009) and the different phases of human experiencing*

The cycle of expansive transformation of an activity system takes place through smaller cycles of expansive learning. Each expansive learning action is associated with particular socio-cognitive processes and states, represented in the Figure 3.7 above, with smaller text in italics.

Expansive learning actions are achieved with the assistance of the interventionist who guides the participants to find data, gives them data about their activity as well as conceptual tools for analysing the double binds and contradictions. Through resolving the contradictions inherent within the system the participants oscillate from individual actions to collective expansive actions and finally stabilise in an expansive collective learning activity. This process is carried out within the Change Laboratory.

An expansive cycle is a developmental process that contains both internalisation (learning of cultural skills and knowledge) and externalisation (creation of the new), and together explain historicity and change of a socio-cultural community or institution. Through the Change Laboratory process and the expansive learning cycle internalisation and externalisation changes form. At first it is internalisation that predominates as training of the novices to become competent members of the activity is systematically carried out (Engeström, 2005). Creative externalisation occurs first in the form of discrete individual innovations. As the disruptions and contradictions of the activity become more demanding, internalisation takes the form of critical self-reflection – and externalisation, and the search for solutions increases. Externalisation reaches its peak when a new model for the activity is designed and implemented. As the new model stabilises itself, internalisation of its inherent ways and means becomes, once more, the dominant form of learning and development (Engeström, 2005). The image that this form of learning brings to mind is that of a staircase where learning is external in the vertical part of the step and internalisation on the horizontal plane and then it begins again in the creation of new material tools (Perez, 2002).

A journey through the expansive cycle is achieved due to the participants' engagement within their learning activity and between their learning activity and their productive activity (see Figure 3.8 below). This engagement enables the participants to stand back from their productive activity, analysing it for its double binds, problems and disturbances in order to devise new and more productive ways of working. The object, therefore, of the expansive learning activity is to transform the system of the productive activity, and the motive is to learn to change the productive activity proactively by finding expansive solutions to new challenges.



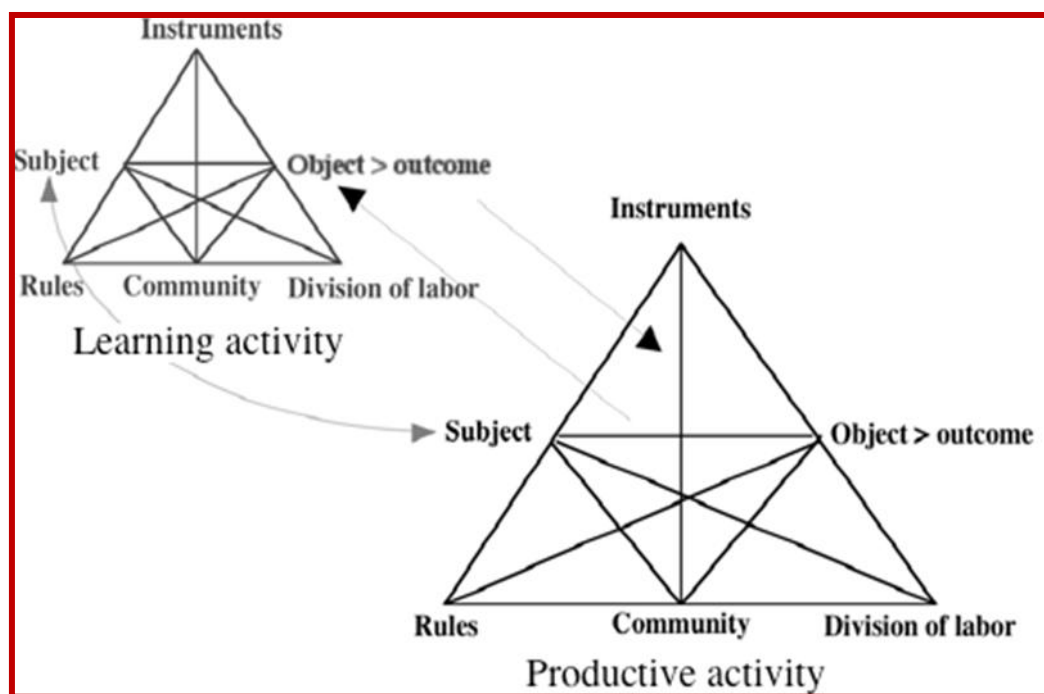


Figure 3.8 Expansive learning activity (Virkkunen, 2008)

Engeström (1987) wrote that “the essence of a learning activity is the production of objectively, societally new activity structures (including new objects, instruments, etc.) out of actions manifesting inner contradictions of the preceding form of the activity in question. Learning activity is mastery of expansion from actions to a new activity... it is an activity producing activity” (Virkkunen & Schaupp, 2011, pp.124-125).

#### 3.2.4 Boundary crossing – vertical and horizontal development

There are several definitions and applications of horizontal development. Beach (1999) views horizontal development as a “series of transitions between different activity contexts; the horizontal aspect of development refers to the way people actually encounter, and develop knowledge and skill both in workplaces and in classrooms and the way their identities change over time” (Guile & Young, 2003, p.71). His perspective refers to horizontal development from one culture to another at the level of the individual learner in other words how an individual transfers his or her experiential and knowledge toolkit from one context to another such as school and work. Van Oers (1998), on the other hand, differentiates between horizontal development and vertical development where the former remains horizontal due to a manipulation of the same tools or artefacts within different contexts and the latter relies

rather on the manipulation of a theoretical tool in order to produce new actions, goals and strategies.

Engeström (1996) sees horizontal learning as taking place in a developmental process of boundary crossing, when participants learn to cross social and cultural borders between different activity systems and come to share a common object. In this sense, the formation of theoretical knowledge and concepts are not to be confused with hierarchical learning models but rather as both vertical and horizontal and in so being affords a possibility of overcoming dualisms found in concepts of nationalism such as *us* and *other*. This movement becomes possible due to the horizontal dimension that occurs across boundaries through multi-voiced dialogue and a re-orchestration of those voices, of their different viewpoints and approaches to come to a common consensus on the way forward. It is therefore the reconstruction of multiple mind sets towards a common object (Edwards, 2009).

Vertical development or vertical learning in Developmental Work Research (Engeström, 1995) is not deterministic but rather a reality that needs to be contended with at the same time and should be understood as containing processes of power and resistance. Edwards (2009) maintains that vertical spaces are to be seen as boundary spaces that are sites of struggle, identity and knowledge which require attending to the *personal contradictions* as people position themselves and make new meanings in relation to the discussions of others within and between networked activities. Her argument differs from that proposed by Engeström (1995) who articulates his verticality through the economic or exchange value of the activity and not as the subjects who identify their use value and find new ways of elaborating this (Edwards, 2010) (see criticisms below for an elaboration).

Encouraging multivoicedness and boundary crossing as a means to reduce roles of power within the Home-School project was necessary in order to arrive at new forms of perceiving and interacting with migrant and refugee mothers and their children. Bhabha and Engeström (see chapter 1) both acknowledge that diversity and boundary-crossing is a postmodern question that can no longer be ignored.

The Home-School project Change Laboratory included two groups of participants that held different and conflicting perceptions of the object of their activity. The overcoming of the

central developmental contradictions of these two activities and the expansion of their object were the driving forces or motives for my research-intervention.

### 3.2.5 *Change Laboratory methodology*

Change Laboratory is a methodology which involves the development of work practices by the practitioners together with an interventionist researcher.

The interventionist approach is encapsulated into three methodological principles:

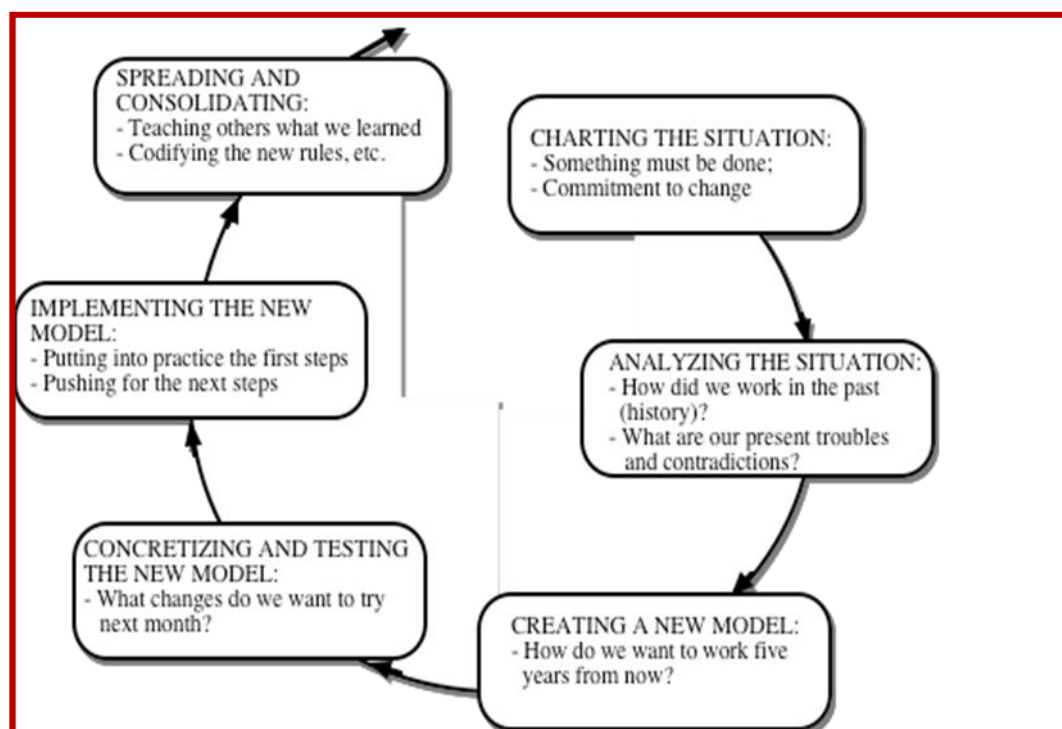
“(1) Follow the objects of co-configuration work in their temporal and socio-spatial trajectories, (2) give the objects a voice by involving the clients or users in dialogues where the object is negotiated, and (3) expand the objects by organising intervention sessions where the producers and clients construct new shared models, concepts and tools to master their objects” (Engeström, 2005, p.447).

The Change laboratory finds its basic method in the application of double stimulation found in the works of Vygotsky (1978). This is achieved through the insertion of a neutral object that is drawn into the problem solving situation and serves as a sign opening up new possibilities and transforming the initial characteristics of the problem with which the child was confronted.

Within the Change Laboratory the neutral stimulus is in the form of ethnographic data acquired from the activity and projected in the form of video clips, graphs, tables or discussions and the activity triangle. The critical incidents and examples stimulate analysis and negotiations between the participants of the activity and consequently a radical expansion of their present activity. The discussions are video recorded and can once more serve as stimulations in later sessions. This method allows for “the collection of rich longitudinal data on the micro-interactions and cognitive processes involved in expansive learning as the participants make visible their work, moving between actions and activity, between the past, the present, and the envisioned future (see Engeström, 1999a, 2000)” (Engeström, 2005, pp.447-448). In joint collaboration, the participants and interventionist proceed from disturbances and tensions experienced by the participants in their daily actions to the analysis of their systemic causes in the system of joint activity and back to the level of individual actions. Subsequently, new tools and forms of acting are designed. The motivation for change

and development is achieved with the help of the data mentioned above, acting as a double stimulation.

A Change Laboratory usually consists of six to twelve weekly sessions of two hours each and several follow up sessions after a period of experimentation. The amount of sessions is determined by where the participants are situated in the reflection of their activity, which is situated methodologically on the expansive learning cycle. The amount of sessions can differ from case to case. Follow up sessions are important and are determined by when and whether the participants find themselves confronted with new contradictions, ruptures or double binds. The Change Laboratory process is divided up into six main phases indicated in Figure 3.9 below. Each phase is composed of finding solutions to specific questions or disturbances that are manifested in the analysis and design process.



*Figure 3.9 The phases of a Change Laboratory process (Engeström, 1996)*

The instruments of the Change Laboratory are designed to create a dynamic interplay between participants' emotional involvement and intellectual distancing as well as a multi-voiced dialogue between them in which they can easily move between concrete observations concerning individuals' actions and the structure of the system of joint activity in which they are taken. The mirror data provokes emotional involvement, which is the dynamic force

moving the analysis and design process forward. At the same time, the conceptual tools and dialogue help the actors to distance themselves from the emotional data and to intellectually analyse the systemic context of individual experiences. When coming to a laboratory session, the participants change their focus from their individual tasks of producing an outcome to analysing and developing the activity system still, however, keeping in mind the concrete situations and emotional tensions of their daily work.

Within the Change laboratory process generalisations are an important concept. All elements of the activity system comprise generalisations concerning the object of the activity or some other element of the system. Davydov (2008) defined activity theoretical generalisations as being synonymous to the essence of the object, a perception of all of its parts. In other words, the generality of a theoretical or a design concept, as found in the design phase of the Change Laboratory, has to be understood as the process of coming into being of a system that starts from basic, dynamic relationships of interaction and becomes gradually enriched, expanded, and generalised (Ilyenkov, 1977). However, there is another form of generalisation which is formed on the basis of abstractions where only the visible characteristics are used to form a picture and to define the object. This type of generalisation is based on fragmentation of the object's properties for example categorisations of migrant and refugee mothers. People come into the Change laboratory process with socio-culturally formed generalisations or abstractions and the aim of the Change Laboratory is that they create new forms of that activity, the design of which is a germ cell or a generalisation containing all the necessary properties of the new activity for example perceptions and behaviour of the migrant and refugee mothers as whole human beings with something to contribute to society.

The setting of the Change Laboratory is constructed on the theoretical propositions of Developmental Work Research and is physically set up as exposed in Figure 3.10 below. The boards are set out horizontally into three columns and vertically into three periods representing the past form of the activity, the present situation and the ideological future. The set up affords the possibility to travel between different periods and levels of abstraction and generalisation.

Mirror boards of the right-hand column are used to represent and examine concrete data concerning the activity. The mirror of the present activity can contain issues such as collaboration, ruptures in the present way of doing things, and challenging solutions. The past

board represents data obtained from critical historical changes in the activity. The future board is used to display data that represents the participants' new concepts of the activity and the relevant tools.

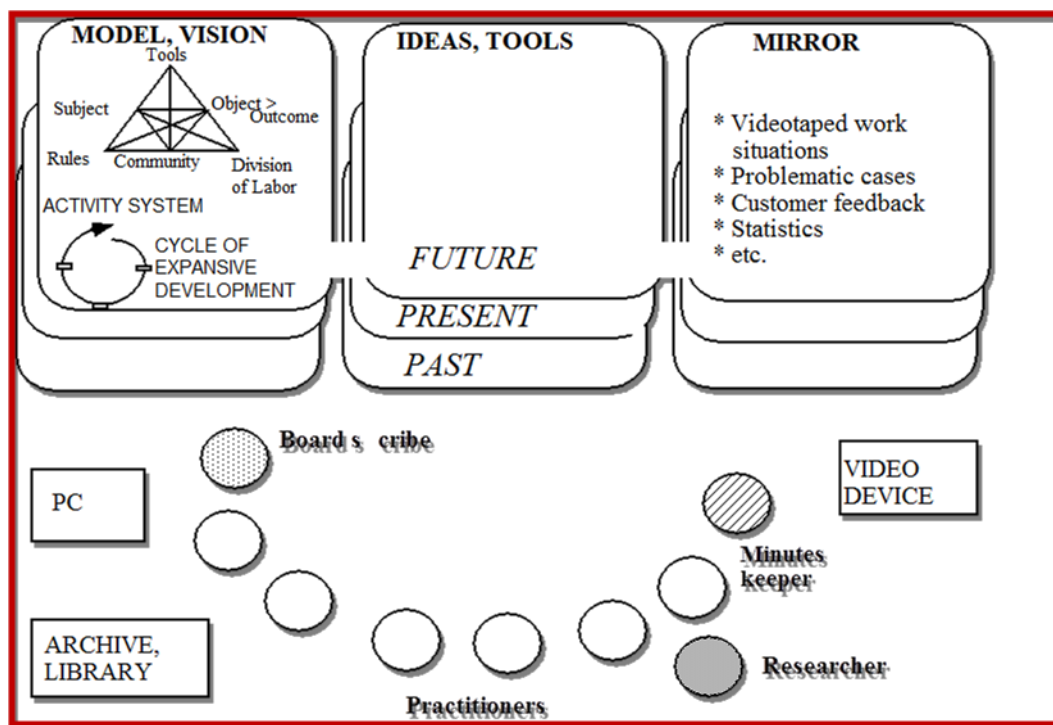
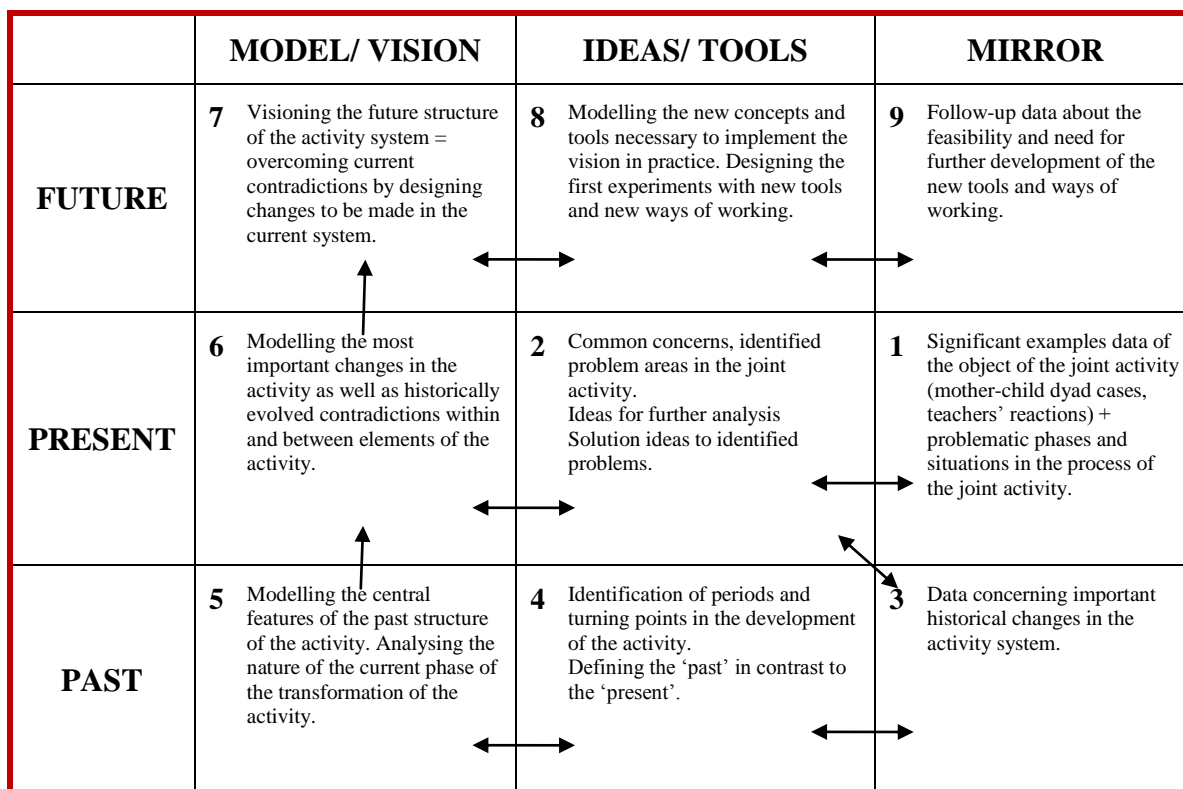


Figure 3.10 A prototypic layout of the Change Laboratory space and its instruments for supporting an interplay between emotional involvement and intellectual reflection (Engeström et al. 1996)

The Model/ Vision boards are used for modelling the three periods of the activity with the help of heuristic models: the model of the activity system, and the model of phases of expansive transformation and learning of the activity. As the participants move between the experiential mirror and the theoretical model, they produce generalisations concerning the historical development of the activity and its current form as well as ideas for new concepts and tools to be experimented with, tested, and used as components in the construction of a new model of the activity.

The *Ideas and tools* boards contain the ongoing reflections and generalisations that arise during the discussions. These reflections are a bridge between the critical mirror data that is highly emotional and generates deep reflection about the mechanisms of the activity system, and the generalised models of the Model/ Vision boards. This space is a stabilising factor to

the mirror boards which provokes questioning, as it is through this that the participants are able to find ways and solutions out of the existing tensions. The process needs to be seen as consisting of interactions that do not take place linearly but rather as a dynamic process that moves backwards and forwards between practice, application and reflection, and this in a collaborative expansive learning atmosphere.



*Figure 3.11 The use of wall boards as a tool for collaborative expansive learning (Virkkunen & Newnham, in press)*

The purpose of the Change Laboratory is not just to fix a local problem, as found with Action research, but rather to provide tools that reveal a general developmental contradiction in the activity that explains recurring problems and disturbances within it. Furthermore, it has the purpose of creating a new model of an activity that is able to overcome its central contradiction. This task is best carried out in those units in which the changes of the thing that the people are working on in the activity and the means for working on that thing in the activity are strongly manifested.

I conclude that Developmental Work Research which makes use of the expansive learning theory in order to offer an important alternative to traditional learning theories has the

collective activity as its unit of analysis. It therefore excludes studies that focus on isolated individuals or relatively super-ordinate societal, cultural or population studies (Makitalo, 2005) as found within non experimental research designs. It does not claim that these socio-cultural levels do not exist, but rather that they are reflected through and within the collective activity system. Engeström (1999) explained this as follows: “This approach implies a radical localism. The idea is that the fundamental societal relations and contradictions of the given socioeconomic formation – and thus the potential for qualitative change – are present in each and every local activity of that society. And conversely, the mightiest, most impersonal societal structures can be seen as consisting of local activities carried out by concrete human beings with the help of mediating artefacts, even if they may take place in high political offices and corporate boardrooms instead of factory floors and street corners” (p.36).

Developmental Work methodology breaks away from former cause-effect models found within the social sciences such as those within experimental research. It does this by reflecting on the interconnection of its diverse components found with the mediating tools, rules, community and division of labour, and how this affects the relation to the object as well as the historical development of the whole and its parts. Furthermore, the argument for his theoretical approach is contained in a refinement of Vygotsky’s four experimental steps for observing development. These are: observation of everyday contemporary behaviour; reconstruction of the historical phases of the cultural evolution of the behaviour under investigation; experimental production of change from rudimentary to higher forms of behaviour; and observation of actual development in naturally occurring behaviour (Scribner, 1985). However, Engeström (2005, p.35) claimed that internalisation of higher psychological functions are not the only kinds of transformations that are mastered and understood today. “People face not only the challenge of acquiring established culture; they also face situations where they must engage in formulating what shall be desirable culture”. This is the provocative question that was introduced through mirror data and tools in the Change Laboratory of this thesis. Desirable cultures are not so easily attained as in our contemporary world transformations are fast moving and require increasing levels of agentive actions due to an escalating use of technologies and human mobility across the world. Such transformations accumulate old debris to a larger degree than simpler systems as each transformation retains part of the old unless consciously destroyed, and as they go along, this debris finally bogs the



system down. The study of such increasingly complex human systems requires a sophisticated methodology.

In addition, this methodology is capable of radically changing work environments and production, differing from those more commonly found in action research by having an approach that is neither top-down nor bottom-up. In contrast to Action research (Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Somekh & Lewin, 2005; Noffike & Somekh, 2009), which focuses on experimenting with practitioners' ideas for new forms of action to solve immediately visible problems, the developmental activity in the Change Laboratory focuses on overcoming historically-evolved and initially invisible systemic causes of visible problems (see development of this argument below). Therefore the basic unit of analysis and development is not an action as such but a system of joint activity that is seen in its historical development. Actions necessitate a linear process with a finite ending, however, activities are circular and expansive. Consequently, instead of trying to find immediate solutions, the developmental activity in the change laboratory aims at understanding and modelling both developmental challenges and the new form of activity to be created. Furthermore, instead of focusing on incremental improvements, the Change Laboratory process focuses on long term development of the activity system. It deals with micro-ontogenetic changes that are accelerated with the aid of Developmental Work Research. The different types of research and their relations to studying open expansive forms of development during the process are illustrated in Figure 3.1 above. Within this figure Developmental Work Research is portrayed as a formative intervention research, in other words, one that has as its objective the agentic learning and development of the collective research participants.

### 3.3 Criticisms

There are several criticisms levered against Engeström's analysis of expansive learning. One of the most persistent is its focus on the transforming material object, thereby neglecting in its analysis to contend with the experiencing subject of the activity or in other words on the individual-collective subject's positioning towards their object. Individual-collective shifts are therefore not accounted for, and neither are conflicts as developmental hot points. The three major criticisms are as follows: Rückriem (2009) and Lompscher (2004) criticised the expansive learning process as neglecting to take into account radical transformative cultures such as that of computers and digitalisation. Engeström and Sannino (2010) state that if these

protagonists are arguing for digital media as a determinant of the nature and possibilities of human activity, they are misled. Despite media being central to many forms of human interaction it is not the only form and such a claim ignores the internal contradictions of capitalism. I shall not elaborate on this debate as it is not central to my thesis.

The second criticism was levered by Young (2001) who stated that expansive learning can be undertaken in other institutions besides schools. However, several school Change Laboratories have been successful in overcoming the former developmental contradiction. Young's further criticism relies on the role of power in expansive learning. He inquires as to how a more vulnerable person, such as a student, is presumed to speak out publicly during a Change Laboratory session. Young (2001) cites several cases where expansive learning has been interrupted by policy managers or participants or both due to conflicts of power. This is one of the questions that needed to be raised within the Change Laboratory process of the Home School project and the answer to this question will be revealed more elaborately in chapters 5. Resistance or agentive modes of actions are necessary for expansive learning to take place and the emotions that arise out of the conflicts, the double binds and dilemmas are something to be contended with in a positive manner. Langemeyer (2006) argues that Engeström's model contains a certain neglect of the subjective problematic. Despite Engeström and Sannino's response that there is a bridge between the system and the personal view, expansive learning has mainly focused on collective and systemic phenomena to date neglecting the perspective of individual-collective development (see Lektorsky, 2009; Edwards, 2009, 2010; Daniels, 2011; Daniels & Warmington, 2007; Miettinen, 2005 and Stetsenko, 2005). This criticism is the focus of my second research question.

Daniels and Warmington (2007) in their article '(a)nalyzing third generation activity systems: labour-power, subject position and personal transformation', wrote that "subject-subject and within subject relations are under-theorised in activity theory and that such a switch of focus requires a theoretical account of social relations and positioning" (p.388). Besides the theoretical contributions of the authors mentioned above R. Engeström (2009) in her article *Who is acting in an activity system* (pp.257-273) argued for a perspective to activity theory that conceptualises participants of that activity as being culturally diverse interacting in several different activity systems at the same time and due to their different cultural origins "do not necessarily share the same meanings with regard to these activities, but they share the process

of engagement and construction of their subjectively unique understandings of their participation based on the communicated messages across and within activities and participants' past experiences of certain practices" (p.262). In her attempt to reply to the appeal laid down by Stetsenko (2005) for a resolution of the dichotomy that still exists between "individual and collective planes of activity (as being) still insufficiently resolved" Engeström draws on Y. Engeström's (1987) interpretation of the three stages of the process of learning established by Bateson (1972). *Learning I* indicates the object, which presents itself as mere immediate resistance, not consciously separated from the subject and instrument by the learner. In *Learning II*, the object is conceived as a problem, demanding specific efforts. The subject is no longer an unconscious agent but an individual under self-assessment. In *Learning III*, the object is seen as a system containing the subject within it. Bateson (1972) wrote that "(s)elfhood is a product or aggregate of Learning II. To the degree that a man achieves Learning III, and learns to perceive and act in terms of the contexts of contexts, his 'self' will take a sort of irrelevance. The concept of 'self' will no longer function as a nodal argument in the punctuation of experience" (p.304). Relying on Engeström's interpretation presented in 1987, she makes a claim that this level captures the multilayered nature of different activities that allows for creative configurations of individual actions and that the unit of analysis should reflect conceptually and epistemologically the "fact that subjectivity and society, in representing emergent properties, differ in the specific mechanisms of their realisation, in their degree of generality, in their power, and in their role in the genesis of practice (with the intersubjective level of practice being historically and ontogenetically prior to the intrasubjective level)" (p.261).

Engeström's argument is very useful in a study of individual subject positioning within a collective activity system. Individual 1, 2 or 3 have different backgrounds and perhaps work in different units of the same organisation and different organisations. Their roles and places within the division of labour may be at different levels within each organisation relying on different values and judgments but in order to reach productivity within that activity they have to find a common consensus a common motive. Furthermore, she argues that the activity is not necessarily at one with that of the surrounding society. Bateson's levels of logic are very illustrative of a developmental movement from abstract thinking through to concrete thinking. In his thesis level zero is highly abstract and level three is that of transcending the common space of everyday. Engeström has an interesting argument but still loses sight of the

possibility that within the collective subject individuals might never be able to adhere to a common motive as the motive is to them inherently contradictory with that of society and therefore they cannot transcend to learning level III. Within the activity under investigation the individuals might not make sense of the object of the activity in the same way and their course of development or change might as well differ in the sense that a person might be at learning level 0, not questioning or refusing to question the existing way of thinking whilst another might be at level 1 of learning, transposing categorisations to all migrants or all contexts, another might at the same time be developing a vision of the future superseding the present and the past. Such an analytical possibility (Sawyer, 2002) is of great interest and shall be demonstrated within chapter 5.

The aim of Change Laboratory methodology is to facilitate a learning movement from level II to that of level III where there is common consensus and trust. This change is supposed to overcome collective dilemmas and double binds experienced due to an embedded contradiction within the system. However, Bateson (1973) states that individuals are driven to level III by double binds or ‘contraries’ generated at level II, to which Tosey (2006) refers as “dilemmas of participation” (p. 9). However, he adds that “even the attempt at Learning level III can be dangerous” (1973, p. 277) leading to psychosis instead of enlightenment and it is “again a projection of a hierarchical, goal orientated mind-set to see Level III as some kind of ‘holy grail’ of learning; it is not guaranteed to be either benign or transcendent” (p.277). This word of warning was taken when I facilitated the Home-School project especially as the participants within this project were voluntary people and the topic of changing the categorisations of others requires changing the perception of self, of their own existence as these categorisations are socially historically created. In accordance with LIII, individuals go beyond self at this level in order to reach another space such as found amongst Buddhists or hybrid individuals, it requires a certain form of transcendence (see Hale, 1994; Vasilyuk 1992; Bateson, 1973) but not necessarily a radical one. Although new designs during the Change Laboratory sessions are radical the actual implementation and elaboration needs frequent retooling over time. Other ethical precautions taken are discussed in the following section.

### 3.4 Ethical implications of intervention research

Mazurek Melnyk and Morrison-Beedy (2012, p.3) propose using the *so what* factor in determining the ethical value and utility of an intervention and I will make use of these questions as a guideline to the ethical considerations that I undertook within this study:

- *What “is the prevalence of the problem and is it modifiable through an intervention”?*

To the first question I answer that the participants of the Home-School project were experiencing rising degrees of conflicts and could not reach an agreement on what they were supposed to be doing. The history of Switzerland attests to a lack of desire to allow immigrants to live in the country which conflicts with their need for foreign low paid workers and international recognition. This contradiction was destabilising the project participants creating a double bind. Double binds are experienced as a source of tension and can lead to depression. The literature review presented in chapter 1 reveals that immigration policies that are based on exclusion or separation of groups give rise to higher levels of unhealth. Switzerland uses an assimilation model for immigrants. Therefore I felt that it would be beneficial for the mainstream society and the immigrants alike to work on a more expansive and empathetic way of living together and the project holders agreed to this logic.

- *What “will be the end outcome of the study once it is completed”?*

The desired outcome was the transformation of the participants’ perceptions of immigrant mothers and their children to one that is more expansive and empathetic and secondly to investigate whether the analysis of individual-collective development through the Change Laboratory sessions was possible.

- *What “difference will the study make in improving health, education or health care quality, costs, and, most importantly, patient, family, or community outcomes”?*

A more empathetic and expansive perception of others will enable the participants of the Home-School project, and through generalisation, the teachers and other social institutions such as health care and social welfare organisations to live in a more healthy environment and to be able to share and learn from each other.

- What “will others do with the study’s outcomes (e.g. clinicians, health care systems, schools, public health departments)”?

The results of a Change Laboratory are a germ cell to new ways of working with the object of the activity which is then generalised to other institutions during meetings and informal discussions between colleagues. In this way the new design continues to grow and expand.

- What “actions will you take to translate your study’s findings to real world settings”?

I have already presented certain results to the department of education and the department of integration of the canton in this study whilst maintaining the protection of the participants. In order to do this certain data was withheld. I intend to write and publish articles and attend conferences taking the same precautions to protect the participants, mothers and children from any harm.

- What “is the chance that others will adopt and implement your intervention based on its feasibility, reproducibility, and cost”?

This type of intervention is both time and, if the interventionist is paid which was not the case in the Home-School project, financially costly. However, the results open up the possibility for other Change Laboratories to be held with a social voluntary institution or even with an informal social group. The powerless and vulnerable may in this way participate in a Change Laboratory process and learn to overcome power structures that oppress them. Furthermore, the analysis of the subject repositioning demonstrates that it is possible to analyse the transformation that takes place in the individual’s actions within the collective subject. This opens up the possibility of discussing topics such as deconstruction and reconstruction at the individual level.

In conclusion, I draw on the words of Engeström (inpress) who states that there are three reasons as to why Formative intervention is needed and viable:

“First of all, all research intervenes. When we observe, analyse and interpret social life, we also influence it, whether we want it or not. In other words, we cannot stay completely outside our research objects; we can only pretend to do so. It seems advisable that we get serious about it and analyse also our own actions and research practices as they interact with those of

our subjects. Secondly, interventions are going on in any case. Any human activity system or organisation is bombarded with deliberate and incidental interventions from outside and from inside. Researchers do not have a monopoly on interventions; in fact, our interventions are often among the weakest ones. Therefore, we should stop fearing that we may ‘contaminate’ the reality – there is no virgin or uncontaminated reality out there. Thirdly, by intervening deliberately and methodically we generate knowledge about what is possible”.

The political and integration organisations of the canton in this study were intervening in the lives of immigrants in a way that was leading to ill health for many of these people, including myself. I have lived in the area since 1985 and despite having a Swiss passport due to marriage, have suffered from several insidious forms of discrimination for example employment, my role as a woman and that of a mother or my ability to accompany my children’s formal education. I carried out research in the various institutions that affected my personal life in order to understand what was driving these forms of discrimination. The project holders’ request that I join their project due to the difficulties that they were experiencing was recognition of the contribution of my previous research. However, it placed me once more in a contested terrain. My presence was difficult for one of the members despite us having worked together on other projects. The reason being that this time we were working on ourselves; it was our perceptions of others that were under question and not those of the migrant and refugee mothers. My *foreignness* was a constant reminder or aggravation to their double-bind; they needed my expertise but did not want it to be from an immigrant, hence the importance of an intervention approach that was not top-down but agentic in nature.

The Home School project had been submitted to the Integration Committee and to the board of education of the canton. The measures, aims and ethical perspectives were all accepted by both bodies, however the project holders and facilitators had not proposed to ask the mothers’ permission to use the information for research which they later intended to do. I therefore made sure that all the mothers were made aware that the homework sessions were being voice recorded and would be used as data but that they would remain anonymous. Only one mother decided that she did not want her homework periods recorded and this was respected.

Despite having been invited into the project I did ask for signed acceptance of the participants to partake in the process of a Change Laboratory. A meeting was held prior to commencement

where the aims and methods of the Change Laboratory were clearly explained to all the participants (see section 3.5 below). They all signed a form of agreement (Appendix 2 translated). They signed another agreement to continue during the process due to growing tension within the sessions.

Formed consent was acquired from the department of education for the Home-School project and I also informed them of my participation in the project and acquired consent to use my communications with mothers and teachers as part of the mirror data and for further research. I explained my double position (facilitating and researching) to mothers that I worked with in the dyads and with the help of translators acquired a signed consent from them (Appendix 4 translated). All the mothers thanked me for helping them and asked whether I could also carry out a Change Laboratory with a group of women of their choice. This research however is not part of this thesis.

I held discussions with several mothers that had participated in previous research that I had carried out and they as well accepted that I use the discussions as mirror data within the sessions. These mothers have become my friends and we met casually to chat and go for walks, shopping or bicycle rides. They encouraged me to write about their lives and I thank them for their warm support.

Articles that have been referred to within this thesis and that were not published were used only after having gained the authors' consent.

All names have been withheld in order to protect the participants and the mothers within the dyads. The name of the Home-School project and that of the canton have been withdrawn from this version of my thesis for the same reason. Certain demographic details have been withheld as it was too easy to trace the area through internet sites. No appendices feature any trace of the institution or the canton for the same reason although it has been mentioned that the study took place in one of the many French speaking regions of Switzerland as in matters of immigration this is relevant.

The background information about the participants includes facts that are vague and which do not reveal his or her identity. The participants in the Change Laboratory sessions are difficult



to mask, however the precaution taken for these people was to mask the name of the canton and future articles will not include all the discursive extracts presented within this thesis.

I had wanted to film several facilitators working with the dyads so that these could be used as mirror data, however the idea was refused as the project holders felt it was too sensitive. I respected their decision and asked the facilitators to keep diaries of their work with the dyads instead and gave them a voice recorder. Prior to recording the meetings with the mothers they were requested to ask the mother's permission each and every time.

I transcribed all the sessions and these were given to the project holders to read after each session and prior to the following.

Throughout the Change Laboratory stress and frustrations experienced by the participants were discussed after the sessions in order to make sure that the disputes that arose during the sessions, stimulated by mirror data and other forms of stimulations, were not having serious health repercussions for the participants. I was assured at all times that they wished to continue and were in control of the situation despite the emotions displayed. Wendy and Victoria actually stated that it was a relief to discuss the issues raised during the sessions.

The ethical guidelines proposed and required by the University of Bath were complied with (see Appendix 1) and the ethical course proposed by the University of Bath online was undertaken and passed with 95% correct answers.

### **3.5 Intervention: Home-School Change Laboratory data collecting process**

Data was collected during 9 of the 10 Change Laboratory sessions held with the project holders by video and voice recording. Either the camera was placed on a tripod or was hand held by a voluntary facilitator. The data was then transcribed at two separate intervals in order to verify the understanding and translation from French to English. The Workshop proceedings were voice recorded and at periods video recorded by myself and other members. I then transcribed the data at two different periods as with the Change Laboratory data. The facilitators kept journals of their work in the mother-child dyads and brought these ongoing journals to the monthly meetings held between the project holders and the facilitators at the

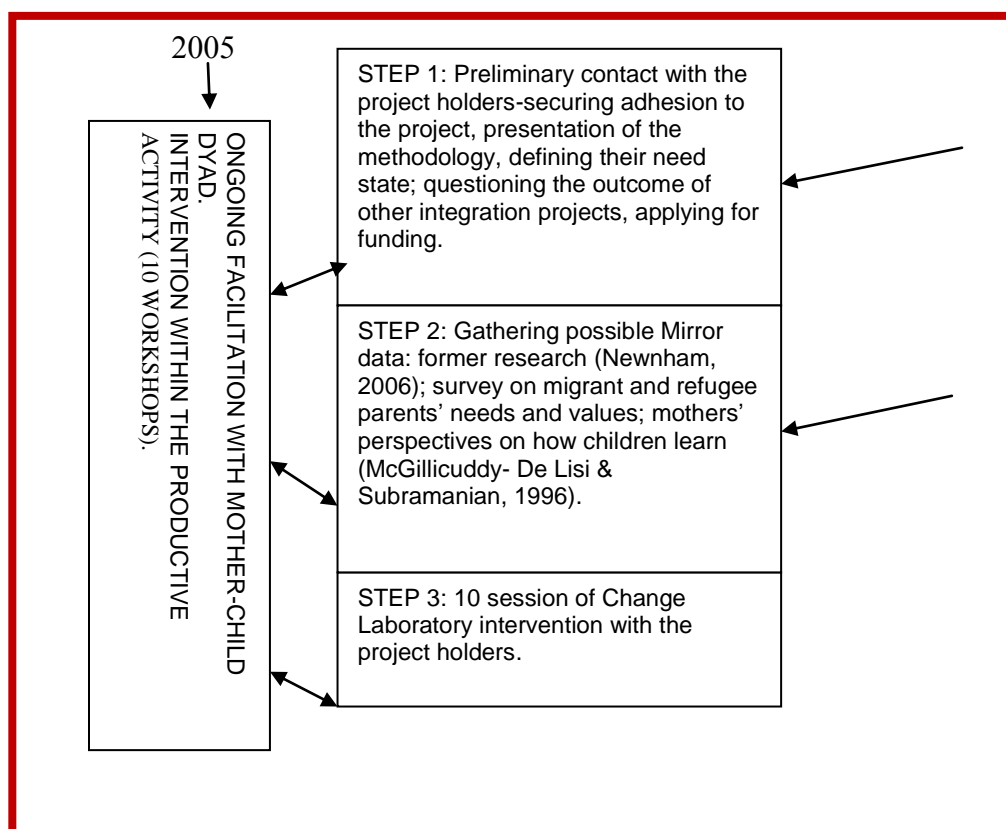
immigration centre. These diary entries were used as mirror data during the workshops and during the Change Laboratory sessions. Furthermore, I collected ethnographic data prior to and during the Home-School Change Laboratory, as indicated in Figure 3.12 and Table 3.1 below:

1) I had been researching on the topic of migrant and refugee families and schools for seven years prior to becoming involved in the project. This data and knowledge served as good ethnographic data for the project as it covered intimate knowledge of how migrant mothers and local mothers taught their children to read and cook. This research had made use of video recording and so clips of these were used as mirrors of the object data within one of the sessions. Furthermore, another research effort covered the opinions and actions of politicians, heads of the educational system, of integration services, of social services, teachers and specialised teachers and children. This data served to guide the building of abstract models for the activity. Moreover, I had been participating in the project as a facilitator for a year prior to commencing the research and had recorded all the sessions. This data was used to guide the construction of the preliminary mirrors for session 1 and 2.

2) I ran a survey questionnaire based on the works of Ward, Bocher & Furnham (2003). The questions were designed in order to understand what forms of acculturation immigrant parents desired for their families and whether there was a difference between those considered secure (ex-pats) and those that were insecure (migrant workers and to a greater degree, refugee populations).

3) Mothers' perspectives on how children develop knowledge (McGillicuddy-De Lisi & Subramanian, 1996) were placed in a table (see table 3.6). The reason for using a table illustrating the findings of this research as a secondary stimulus studies was to demonstrate that mothers in different parts of the world do not share the same perceptions of how children develop knowledge. A model was drawn up of the results of this research and projected into one of the sessions as a mediating tool.

4) As indicated in the Figure 3.12, I also continued to facilitate within two mother-child dyads and parts of this data (transcribed discussions only) were used within the sessions as mirror data. Any information that I thought could be harmful to the mothers or children was, however, never revealed.



*Figure 3.12 Data collecting process (the arrows indicate mutual and external influence)*

The Table 3.1 below fixed the dates on which the Change Laboratory sessions with the project holders were to take place. Furthermore, it established that dates that the project holders would meet with the facilitators in order to establish new types of actions within the mother-child dyads. Initially the research-interventionist (that is myself) led the facilitators workshop after this the project holders, Steven and Thomas, in an agentic action decided to run the workshop. However, the tension within the workshops increased over time and the project holders asked for help. I therefore intervened in the workshops that were more problematic or when there had been increased tension between the different stakeholders after the last workshop and prior to the following one. In some of the workshops Steven and I intervened alternatively depending on what the topics were. For example my insider's role as a facilitator gave me knowledge of what the facilitators were experiencing in their dyads and I was able to propose alternative solutions to those already in operation. My contributions were not always appreciated by Thomas but the facilitators voiced their appreciation of the new insights offered.

Table 3.1 Data collecting timetable

Date	Activity	Action-method	Interventionist
10.10.2006 Sess. 1	Project holders. Learning Activity CL	Preparation CL acceptance/ theoretical models	Denise
16.11.2006	Productive Activity	Film & voice recording. Presentation of research acceptance	Denise
12.12.2006 Sess. 2	Learning Activity	Film & voice 'historical grid' 'mirror of mother'	Denise
19.12.2006	Productive Activity	Film & voice recording	Steven and Thomas
25.01.2007 Sess. 3	Learning Activity	Film & voice	Denise
25.01.2007	Productive activity	Film, handnotes, voice	Steven and Thomas
26.01.2007	Somali cultural interpreter	Voice recording and hand notes	Denise
1.02.2007 Sess. 4	Learning Activity	Film & voice	Denise
8.02.2007	Productive Activity	Film, handnotes and voice	Steven, Thomas
13.02.2007 Sess. 5	Learning Activity	Film & voice recording Secondary stimulus= triangle Model of ex-pat parents and refugee parents	Denise
27.02.2007	SI to discuss new research with mothers	Hand notes	Denise
20.03.2007 Sess. 6	Learning Activity	Film & voice recording model of mothers and education worldwide	Denise
27.03.2007	Ethnographic mirror data	Film & voice Keep diaries	Denise
10.04.2007 Sess. 7	Learning Activity	Film & voice Mirror from within own experience as an immigrant	Denise
12.04.2007	Productive Activity	Film & voice Mirror of mothers and education Facilitators' diary readings	Steven, Thomas and Denise
22.05.2007 Sess. 8	Learning Activity	Film & voice	Denise
24.05.2007	SI Productive Activity	Film & voice Facilitators' diary readings	Steven, Thomas and Denise
4.06. 2007 Sess. 9	Learning Activity	Film & voice	Denise
7.06.2007	SI Productive Activity	Film & voice Facilitators' diary readings New Charter	Steven, Denise

### 3.5.1 The theoretical unit of analysis

The unit of analysis for this thesis is represented in Figure 3.14 below and consists of 2 activity systems.

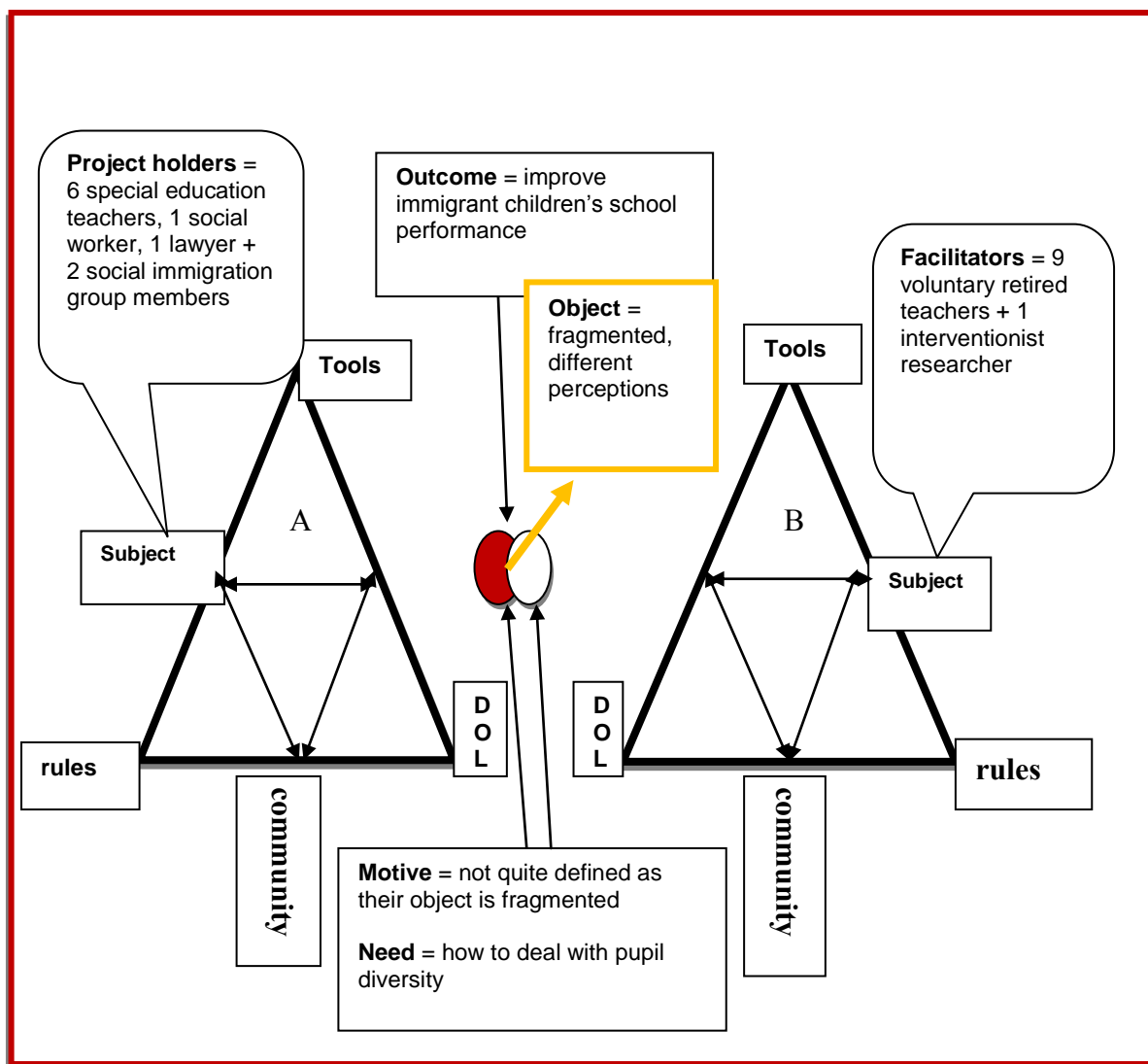


Figure 3.13 Unit of analysis

The following information was presented briefly in chapter two, but could not be explained in Developmental Work Research and Change Laboratory terminology at that stage.

The Change Laboratory process took place within the Learning Activity (A) which was only held with the project holders. They would then attempt to utilise their new ideas in the monthly meetings held with the facilitators (B). After each workshop the project holders brought their frustrations and complaints concerning that workshop to the following Change

Laboratory. As the researcher-interventionist and facilitator, I recorded the proceedings of the monthly workshops and made use of clips from this as mirror data within the learning activity.

The Learning Activity: **Activity A** consisted of the project holders, ten people working on the project on a voluntary basis. Five of these people had daily work activities which mostly involved doing remedial teaching with migrant and refugee children within the local school program. They were all situated between the ages of 25 to 35 (their pseudonyms were Victoria, Thomas, Lilia, and Frank), with the exception of the person who acted as moderator for the facilitators' workshop whom we shall call Steven. The ages are relevant as culture shifts occur and different generations might have different conceptions of things and processes. These people were all born and raised in the area of research by Swiss parents with Swiss ancestors dating three generations back. Four members of the Swiss Immigrants association joined the group, they were: (all names are fictive) a young woman from Somali parents, born and raised in the area (Wendy); the head of the association who was a social worker but had run the organisation for twenty years, was due for retirement and born and raised in the area (Georgette); the secretary who was a young woman from another canton (Regina) and was studying to become a social worker; and a retired lawyer who had a particular interest in the protection of migrants. She was also born and raised in the area (Sylvia). The project holders participated within the Change Laboratory learning activity prior to each workshop. The session was often be used to correct their trajectory with the facilitators and to find new ways forward. There were 10 two hour sessions.

The project holders (Activity A) held a monthly workshop with the facilitators (Activity B) in order for the latter to express the problems and joys of working with their dyads and the teachers. They then attempted to provide the facilitators with solutions to the problems either in the form of tools or rules. Furthermore, the project holders and I sought funding for the project and communicated with the media, school heads and politicians.

**Activity B:** The facilitators were all retired primary school teachers born and raised in the area of study, and their ages ranged roughly from 60 to 65. The facilitators (B) interacted with the teachers on problems encountered and solutions found in their work with the mother-child dyad. Some mothers would speak of problems encountered with the teachers and it was the facilitators' role to improve upon the relation between the teaching community and the

parents. Their activity was to create tools and transmit societal rules, which could also be seen as tools, for the migrant mothers in the project through doing homework with a mother and her child. Their desired outcome was to integrate these mothers into the wider society by getting them out of their homes and the motive of their object was to improve on the children's school performance.

The workshops took place once per month. Development of this group's knowledge and understanding of their social world and that of the mothers/ families was monitored in order to assess the shifting levels of insulation between the facilitators and the dyads, and its power structure and implications for the families encountered. This group took a two month summer break and a session was recorded after this period in order to evaluate changes. Two more monthly sessions were then recorded. The project was still operational in 2012.

### 3.5.2 *Researcher-facilitator role (see ethical implications under section above)*

Prior to my intervention in the homework group I was working as a voluntary mother-child worker (*facilitator*). I began working with my family in August 2005, almost a year prior to the research intervention thesis. I continued to work with this family for another year and also worked with two other families.

The project holders (Activity A) and the facilitators (Activity B) were individually and collectively arguing over what to do with their project, they could not agree on what they should be doing and so their object was fragmented. The project holders said that they needed to overcome the problems that existed in the classrooms between the teachers and immigrant children as many teachers complained that they were incapable of teaching children with such a diverse array of problems. Their desired project outcome was said to be an improvement in the immigrant children's behaviour and therefore an improvement in their school performance. The purpose of the Change Laboratory was to find new expansive and collective ways of working on the object.

My role as interventionist was to provide information that could help the project holders to overcome their existing contradiction. In order to do this the interventionist gathers data that could be used to illustrate their contradiction. The interventionist in this sense attempts to see ahead and to open a path to the possibility of finding new creative and agentive ways of

working in the activity. As I have stated previously, my research experience in former years as well as my own personal experience of being an immigrant mother in the region gave me extra insight. The emotional implications were not always easy to cope with but far less than in my initial research endeavours. I continually monitored my attitude and ‘*objectivity*’ reminding myself that it was not my project and that I was there to open the way but not to create it. Furthermore, the interventionist does not walk away once the sessions are completed. The interventionist remains available for further consolation when needed.

In the following section I shall discuss different factors that concern the research presented in this thesis

### 3.5.3 *Generalisability, validity, reliability and transferability*

Generalisability refers to whether the research findings are applicable in other research settings. Change Laboratory is designed as a tool kit for researchers that wish to study and facilitate development. The participants of the Change Laboratory design a new germ cell of their future activity and it is this germ cell that is said to be generalised to the wider society. In the case of this research one of the new germ cells was a concept of trust based on the idea of more inclusive and empathetic conceptions of immigrant mothers and their children. Moreover, trust between the various stakeholders was an essential and necessary tool for collaboration between the different stakeholders.

Transferability refers to the applicability of the research to other situations. Change Laboratory methodology has been applied in many different situations and the proposed subject within subject positioning, as a richer more useful way of analysing the data would, I believe, be useful when applying the methodology within voluntary organisations or organisations that deal with subaltern people.

I did not design Change Laboratory but I did have to choose how to gather the preliminary ethnographic data and the data necessary for the primary and secondary stimuli that were to follow. I believe that the stimuli were relevant and valid as they produced the desired shift from abstract to concrete thinking with most of the participants. Change Laboratory designed by Y. Engeström (1987) is very rigorous. It is a methodology that covers all aspects of a developing organisation.



This type of research cannot be replicated in its exact form as the participants of another Change Laboratory have their own personal and collective histories. Change Laboratory is a tool kit for facilitating change. How this change takes place is not predictable. The participants of the Home-School Change Laboratory participated honestly and completely throughout the 9 sessions and this produced rich data for analysis. Perhaps, if I had not been a facilitator as well as the intervention researcher and a foreigner the results would have been different. But this is not important as the aim of the intervention was not to produce an outcome that could be replicated but rather to produce change that could alleviate the tension amongst the participants of the Home-School project and this it managed to do despite the difficulties incurred. I believe that my argument and the theoretical construction to sustain it are reliable and could be reproduced as an analytical method using the data of another Change Laboratory.

#### *3.5.4 Negotiating the mandate for the Home-School Change Laboratory intervention and anchoring it to the organizational context (5.10.2006)*

As stated previously, I was initially a facilitator within the project and continued to be so throughout the period of research. The work that was carried out with the mother-child dyad was used as mirror data in the sessions. After several months, heated debates began within the monthly meetings held between the project initiators and the facilitators and I was concerned as to the possible breakdown of the project. I held a meeting with the project initiators and the members of the social immigration organisation and proposed to carry out a Change Laboratory with the project holders and the facilitators. The Four Fields of the possibilities of change (Figure 3.14 below) was projected and discussed.

The four field model was used to demonstrate the different possibilities of change that were open to the participants. They could remain at the individual level of actions with no attempt to overcome their central developmental contradiction for example, the facilitators could chose to say that they were retired and so what they did with the mothers and children was always an improvement on their previous situation and therefore they did not need to align with the project object, whereas other facilitators might chose to facilitate in accordance with the project rules without a clear insight into what they were hoping to achieve.

*Figure 3.14 Four types of organisational cultures of dealing with work problems*

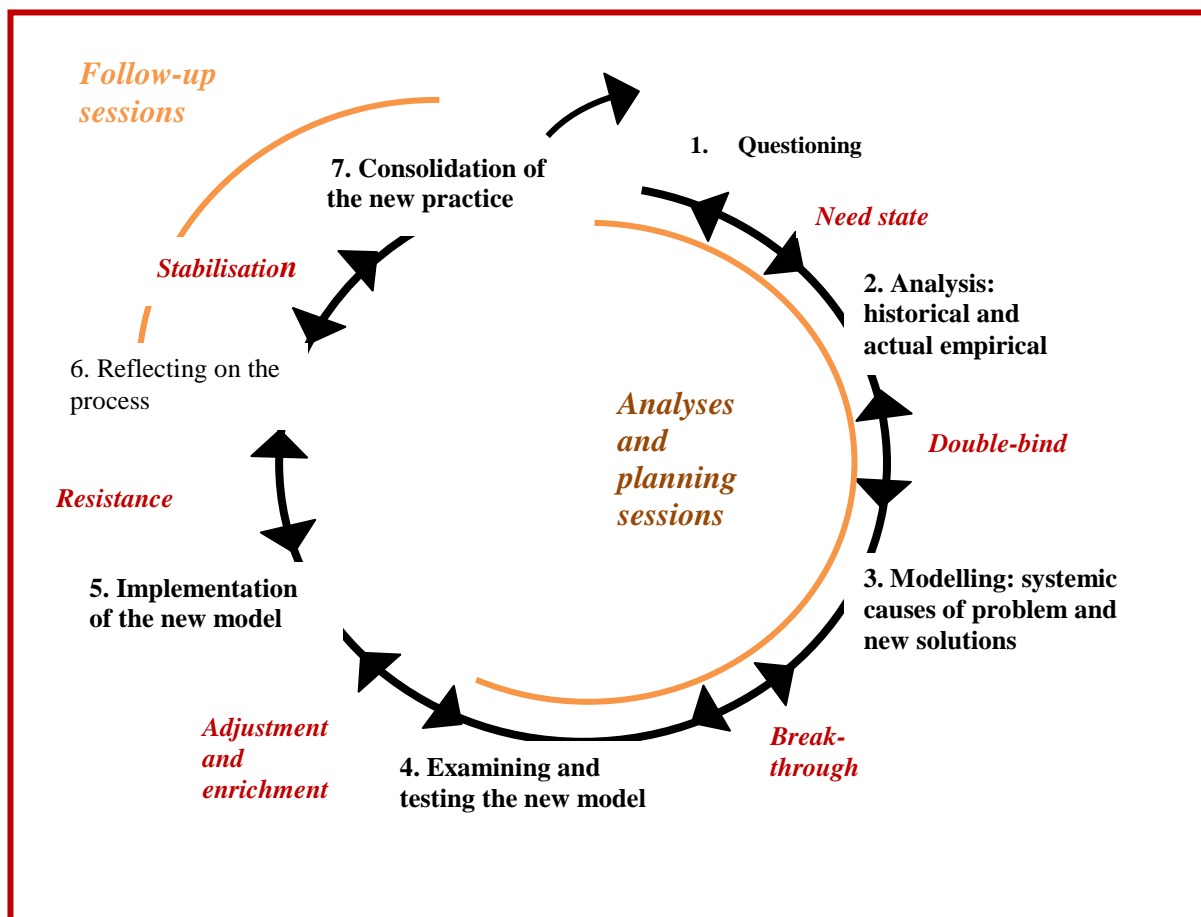


Figure 3.15 Expansive learning cycle (Engeström, 2005)

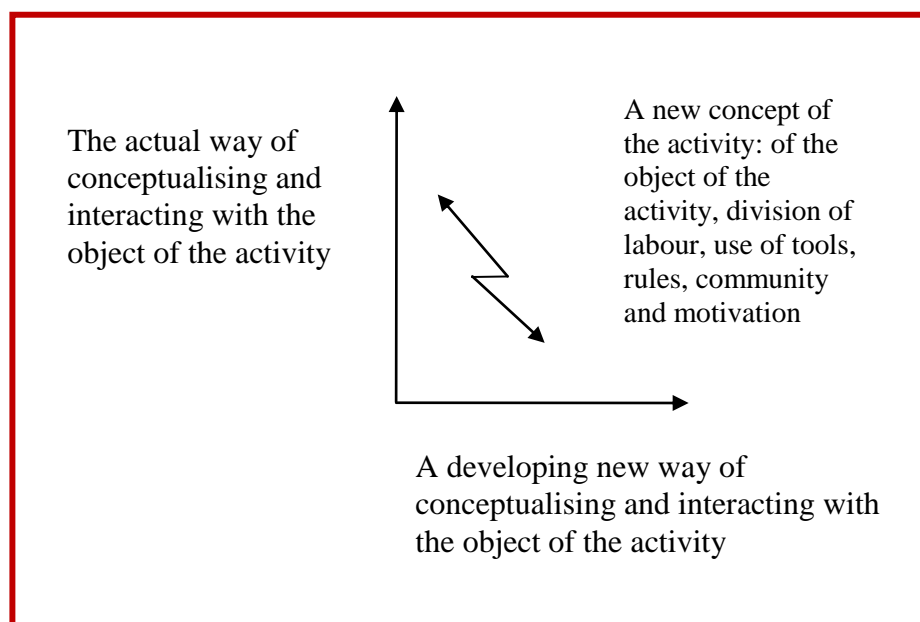


Figure 3.16 A contradiction between the present activity and the construction of a new concept for the activity (Engeström, 2005)

The proposition was unanimously accepted except for one member:

Victoria: *Doing anything is better than nothing, and there is no need to complicate the issue.*

Steven: *We do not want any over the top stuff*

Victoria: *Yes that is the thing, we are practical people*

Lilia: *Hmmm maybe not so practical but I think that she has something... I mean why are we always so afraid of anything new?*

Thomas: *Listen... I do not need someone recording everything... anyway we are pedagogues of teachers and so do not need someone showing us the way... (throws down his pen in anger at the above statement). We know what we are doing, we planned this thing anyway.*

Steven: *Look we do have basic problems*

Victoria: *Bigger than basic, enormous*

Steven: *I mean... Yes... even in schools... there are... so let's give it a try*

Lilia: *Ok I am prepared to try... after all it could help us*

Frank: *I certainly have had dealing with all the problems and I am not ready to let this thing go*

Sylvia & Regina: *we are in*

Georgette: *well then we can start going forward how do we begin?*

Thomas: *Ok but I am not doing anything extra... I will see at the end if it is of any use but don't ask me to change the way that I do things, I know what I am doing. They have to change, is that clear? We don't have a problem, they do. Our children behave in schools, they don't take drugs and drink and fight with knives...*

Steven and Victoria: *That is not true of all of them*

In the above extract Thomas's initial perception of migrant and refugee mothers and their children illustrates a strong tendency of assimilation. A collective use of the term 'they' is used to refer to the mothers and their children. Steven and Victoria, when referring to immigrant mothers, used the depersonalized indicator 'them'.

Thomas's reaction to the intervention was possibly due to several differences to be found in conventional Change Laboratory intervention practices as this was a voluntary project and therefore lacked a management structure that oversaw the process and had roles of power. The project holders and the facilitators could leave the Home-School project when and if they desired as they had no real binding contract. The second factor was that I was a student researcher and not a government designated body sent to investigate and transform the

activity. These factors were problematic to varying degrees throughout the intervention process and required careful negotiation and planning on my behalf.

Despite Thomas's strong opposition, the group decided here and later that it was worth trying to solve the problems and the tensions that they were experiencing within and between the activity systems and they signed an agreement of participation in the research-intervention project. Despite the signatures, adhesion needed to be renegotiated at a later phase when the tensions among the participants became truly critical. At that moment, allowing the participants the right to withdraw their participation reduced the emotional level and enabled them to re-evaluate their progress.

The preliminary definition of the need and object of intervention was acquired by means of an evaluation of the problems and difficulties encountered by other integration projects in the canton and by their own projects over the past year. This task was set in the beginning in an attempt to counteract the tensions that Thomas's outburst raised in the group. The results of this analysis are displayed in the Table 3.2: Learning activity Task 1 below.

The idea behind this set task was that perhaps by looking at other projects they would be able to understand how theirs fitted into the wider picture. The participants decided that the major problems with the integration projects were funding; they did not perceive any social-cultural problems. This was a mechanical problem and not a contradiction. It however anchored the Change Laboratory to the organisational context. As one of the problems mentioned was the lack of funding, the researcher-interventionist sent a request for funding to the Integration commission in Bern, with the funding proposal drawn up by the project holders. The reply, which took three months, stated that the project's focus was on children's homework and school failure and the mothers' integration appeared only peripheral and therefore was not able to be funded by the confederation but needed to be funded by the canton. When the reply came the Change Laboratory had already begun, so this was used as a stimulus. They were very surprised, the emotional level of the participants' response was high leading and reinforced their need state.

Table 3.2 - Task 1: Evaluation of other integration projects in the Canton

Time of operation	Name	Positive	Problems	Propositions
1 year	Information evenings for new arrivals.	The festivities, food drinks etc. went well.	Transmission of integration rules: Lack of interest-reason not known. Perhaps too formal. Information sent in flyers and not in person.	Try to find other networks to transmit information. Perhaps through the municipality or social services.
Two weeks	Day to celebrate differences.	Very positive over all. People enjoyed the films and other activities.	Number of voluntary workers and finance.	Find more people and finances.
7 courses of 2 hrs each	Courses on integration: what laws, social rules, how to communicate with social services etc.	Extra courses need to be given.	Not enough support from the integration committee and time for each course.	Acquire more overall support and finances.
2 years	Meeting space for women	Women were able to speak about their traumatic experiences.	Women stopped attending the sewing classes as they lacked finance.	Make this kind of activity more official and provide funds for a crèche or lift service.
6 months	Bridge	Those that attended found the information and exchange helpful.	Very few people attended the sessions. We were often left with three individuals.	Need to make an effort to let people know that the service exists. More funds.
3 years	Parrainage	The courses given to those to help new arrivals were successful and valorising.	The project did not have a future as we lacked finance and people were not paid so they could not find the time outside of families and work.	Make this an official activity that is integrated into the system. It would give jobs to migrants.
3 months	Give me work and I will learn your language.		This project was designed by a group from Somalia but nothing happened.	It was badly designed and had little focus.
4 years	Intercultural space	Cooking, walks in the forest, visits of the municipality, theatre, songs and language lessons.	No problems. This project attracts a lot of migrant women. It is a friendly space.	No suggestions it is working the way that it is.

The participants were asked to discuss other problem areas within their project besides that of funding. A list was drawn up and all suggestions were structural problems, such as janitor's keys, teachers, classroom space, facilitators and rule breaking. They did however decide that their project was not improving but degrading due to internal conflicts and a lack of collaboration between the different partners. This discussion defined their need state. They concluded that something had to change but they did not know what or why. This was of great interest to the research side of the work as it indicated that they were unaware of the source of their conflicts and immediately presumed that it could only be due to the structure or to teacher's lack of good will. As was mentioned in chapter 2 of this thesis, an action research-intervention would have worked with the problems at this level and while these issues were problematic and raised levels of tension between the different stake holders their resolution was simple and not the real cause of the conflict, meaning that it was relatively easy to get the janitors to open the classrooms and the facilitators to contact the centre for advice.

Due to the participants' heavy work load it was decided that there would be one two hour session per month held between the researcher-interventionist and the project initiators until the last three sessions where time required the sessions to be at ten day intervals. (see Appendix 3 session plan and hours).

The researcher-interventionist proposed to run a second Change Laboratory with the facilitators, but the project holders felt that they could 'copy' the process of the sessions and reproduce it during the workshops held with the facilitators. Their position was accepted initially and the workshops were a work space "on the shop-floor" (Engeström, 2005, p.291) where the project holders were able to put into practice what they were learning within the Change Laboratory sessions. These workshops were their Productive Activity and produced very rich data about the concept of immigrant mothers and their children. After several sessions the project holders asked me to intervene as they could not come to common consensus with the facilitators (see Table 3.2 above).

### *3.5.5 Home-School Change Laboratory sessions and workshop*

This section shall now present the Change Laboratory process with the aid of the Home-School Change Laboratory. The section above demonstrated how the preliminary discussions are held and how the interventionist goes about negotiating the mandate and anchoring it to

the organizational context. In the following each section will begin by presenting the intervention in the Learning Activity (project holders) and then the consecutive workshop held in the Productive Activity with the facilitators and the project holders.

I shall present this section both as the methodological approach giving the details and process that the intervention took and additionally offer analytical reflections on the developmental process of the participants.

The data that is portrayed was chosen to illustrate those discussions that I perceived as being key moments of the participants' change from exclusive to more empathetic and elaborate perceptions of the migrant and refugee mothers and their children. The analytical contributions will be taken into the analytical chapter that follows for deeper analytical elaboration.

#### 3.5.5.1 Learning Activity (Session 1 - Introduction) (10.10.2006)

A set up of the change laboratory was projected and discussions were held on the inconveniences found with the system. Some participants found it heavy and too detailed, but as time went on they understood why the structure is so complex. The process of the past, present and future use of the wall boards was explained as was the expansive learning cycle. Obviously, there were too many concepts to be retained by all within the first session and so this needed to be covered later on. However, the project holders were all qualified people, mostly special needs teachers, and they took their involvement seriously, studying the models and terms at home and then asking further questions at the following session.

TASK 2: (Task 1 was carried out in the preliminary phase see above) The nomination of the scribe and minutes taker had already been negotiated in the preliminary session. I decided on a moderator for the first work space with the facilitators and this person was also an assistant moderator in the Learning Change Laboratory. Initially this appeared to be a good idea, but it became evident that resistance was being transmitted through the moderator's role of power at certain stages and this created an added difficulty to overcome.

TASK 3: The second step was to voice their joys and sorrows until date (period 2004-2006) in the project. They were not asked to introduce each other as it rather took the form of a



spontaneous discussion and the participants knew each other. The information was then transcribed onto the past and present mirror chart (see Table 3.3).

*Table 3.3 - Task 4: Learning Activity: Situating problems with the Productive Activity*

Things that are going well	Things that are not going so well
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive feedback from the schools on some children's progress</li> <li>• Some mothers joined social clubs for sewing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mothers not sent to French language lessons (breaking rule: 'integrating mothers')</li> <li>• Do not contact Swiss Immigrants (breaking rule: 'contact SI immediately when in doubt')</li> <li>• No notion of the mother's integration (breaking rule: take the mothers out of their homes)</li> <li>• Negative relation with the schools</li> <li>• Lack of collectivity (facilitator)</li> <li>• Lack of funds for social project events and lack of time</li> <li>• Lack of trust (schools and facilitators)</li> </ul>

The researcher-interventionist asked how they thought that they could solve the problems that they were encountering within their project and the discussion turned to blaming the facilitators whom, they argued, *'did not have the same vision of the object as they did'*. Georgette however attempted to open up the discussion but this was initially rejected:

Wendy: *Yes that is so but maybe they don't have the time, or things happen too fast, or something like that. Perhaps we should discuss this with them*

Thomas: *We have discussed it with them several times*

Georgette: *Ok but there are new ones starting now so we can think of how to improve so that we don't encounter this problem again*

At a certain stage one of the participants attempted to turn the conversation to the integration of foreign mothers but this was met with resistance. The discussion does however illustrate that they were at least in a movement towards attempting to define the object of their activity:

Victoria: *Am I allowed to add things as well?*

Interventionist-Researcher: *Yes of course*

Victoria: *Ok well I really feel that they hardly ever mention the mother's integration, how she is navigating herself in her world and those kinds of things*

Thomas: *Hey we are doing homework, we are not a (swears) social welfare society*

Victoria: *Oh jeez really sometimes... they still are meant to be integrating the mother*

Thomas: *Only through getting her to understand the home-school relation and how to find a French language lesson and other activities that are offered by (the immigration organisation) and the other language groups*

Victoria: *Well even that is not being done, as we said before*

Lilia: *Yes it seems that they are doing everything and the mothers are just sitting*

Steven: *Ok let's accept that the topic of integration is not discussed as much as it should be. I have another complaint, we don't seem to be able to get a good relation going with the schools for the key and work area for the (mother and child) dyad even though I usually attempt to make the contact myself and to take the (mother and child) dyad to the first meeting. I think we need to think about how to improve on this*

Frank: *I have spoken to the janitors about the keys several times*

Regina: *bit of a lack of cooperation*

The topic of integrating the mothers into the wider society was only superficially touched upon due to the tensions expressed by Thomas and was side-stepped through the introduction, once more, of the problems encountered with the facilitators. Thomas expressed his perception of *integrating the mothers* as being simply doing things that made them less visible in society.

The discussions for the moment illustrate the confusion that the project holders have over what they are really working on. Wendy, in the following, mentions the family's distress which is interesting as she is not a facilitator and does not enter into contact with the dyads so I deduced that the only way that she could have such inside knowledge is because she is a child of refugee parents from Somalia. Wendy's spontaneous reaction is empathetic however later sessions reveal how she is torn between being part of the mainstream society and that of her family. The other participants miss her point and as Victoria gets back to filling in the charter:

Wendy: *I think as well that we have a problem with the facilitators, they work very individually, they don't share much with the others and do not function as a unit where*

experiences and resources can be shared. *Obviously some of these families are in great distress and the facilitators need some sort of support but they don't call each other at all or at least I have never heard them mention this type of strategy... have any of you?*

Others: *No no uh no*

Victoria: *Ok so lack of collective work, what else?*

The participants decided to revisit their Home-School charter due to the lack of collaboration and coordination being experienced by all.

Task 5: They mapped out their Home School charter on an activity triangle (Figure 3.17).

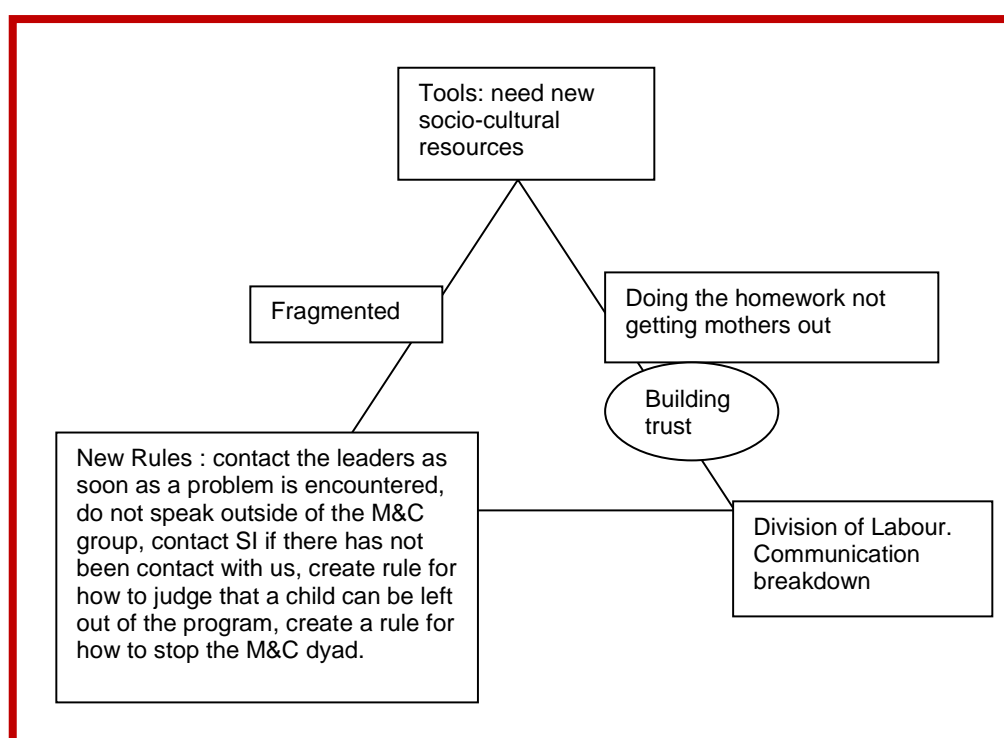


Figure 3.17 Using a secondary stimulus to find the central contradiction

They also decided to take time to have snacks and casual chats with the facilitators in order to build relations of trust. The movement here is one of moving from the abstract to the concrete via the use of a secondary stimulus, the Change Laboratory model.

At this moment the object of their activity, homogenising the facilitators' perspectives and actions, is interesting as it reveals that at this stage the object of their Learning Activity is to transform the facilitators with the desired outcome being that the facilitators will then facilitate

the mothers' assimilation into the wider society. Their desire to build trust is at the moment a transitory object but once acquired will transform into a tool that will help to reach their former outcome of assimilating migrant and refugee mothers into the wider society.

### 3.5.5.2 Productive Activity 1 (16.11.2006)

The moderator was a chosen project initiator. The project holders sat at the head of the room and had a white board behind them. The facilitators, including the researcher-interventionist, sat in a horse-shoe shape opposite them. The moderator asked the facilitators to speak of the positive and negative events while working in their dyads. He resumed the problems on the activity triangle.

The main issues raised were:

- Lack of communication between the different stakeholders
- A new booklet should be designed and sent to all the teachers with the rules and tools and the division of labour
- The facilitators needed to contact project initiators when a problem was encountered
- A way of breaking away from the family had to be devised

### 3.5.5.3 Learning Activity (SESSION 2 Chartering the situation further) (12.12.2006)

The session began with a discussion of the workshop held with the facilitators. It was basically accepted that trust had to be built between the different stakeholders and that the rules of the project needed to be reinforced. The session then turned to discuss the actual overall problems of the project that were mentioned in the previous session. The discussion turned around the broken rules and it was decided that the children should carry a notebook that would inform every one of what they should do. Certain participants opposed this measure, arguing that it was giving added responsibility to the migrant and refugee mothers and little children, and would therefore lead to further complications.

I chose to project a video of an interview that I had held with one of the mothers. This is the answer to my question '*how do you want your life here to be?*'

## Textbox 3.1 – Mirror 1: Mother Anna

*'not permit F permit B...Asylum man no work that is what difficult is...no money that is difficult...no permit...my sister has a permit 13 years my sister and children. My husband refugee, I have no work, he pays for everything...no money...many refugees with a B permit have work, what is difficult is that F permit no work. Some work then we live two months three months and then nothing. Before man was tired how many people had he asked I would like work...ohhhh!!! ...Mr, F permit, sorry no work!. Now this man has a B permit and work. F permit, everyone stays at home. B permit everyone works that is good, no more asking the centre for money sometimes they give and sometimes they refuse...often it is no...you work ok ...you don't work no...my husband works, me...the children it is the same thing they help no one...we have to pay everything and the money is theirs...that is the way that it is...if you don't have work and you ask the centre then no always no...many people say that the children don't get work...the children how many years of school...school finished now work...they work at centre for 3 years, 1 day 10 francs...that is it...many children from Somalia in (name with held)...that is it ...afterwards there are many problems...then it is us...ohhhh!!!*

The projection of this voice video resulted in conflicting opinions, a division in the subject due to a contradiction between the subject and the object. This conflicting situation initially mediated the participants' learning process:

Victoria: *Oh that is the reality.*

Thomas: *We all know this and that has nothing to do with us*

Wendy: *How can you say that?*

Steven: *We need to emphasise getting the mother out of the home, it is the only way... they are not socialising with the wider population*

Thomas: *We have to remain realistic. Integration cannot imply moving into the (countries) social circles. These people need to get to know how things are done here and how to do them so that we don't have to run after them all the time and to prevent the teachers suffering from burnout. But more than that is unrealistic. We have our families and our ways that they could never be part of*

Wendy: *That is so nice I am actually so glad Thomas that you finally informed me that I am not one of you and will never be. Actually if you are the example of what being you is then I would rather be me (silence) whatever that might mean*

Victoria: *I don't think that you should take it at face value, Wendy, he was just speaking theoretically ... I mean if we did not have problems with these children then we would not*

*have started this project in the first place so he is not far off the point. I mean I don't want to appear differential or anything, you know me, **I take everyone as an equal, but there are things that you just can't ignore***

Thomas: *That that I (stuttering)*

Wendy: *Oh and what are those things that you can't ignore?*

Victoria: *We are not referring to you we are referring to **those that just can't bridge the educational and social gap***

Wendy: *I was probably considered under that light as well and so I don't think that your reflections are very diversity-orientated and you are all hypocritical. **In fact the truth really is that you just want the people to learn to behave and then to remain out of sight***

Thomas: *You seemed to agree about this until now, seems you have a change of face*

The argument put forward by Thomas at the end is important, as the mirror data touched Wendy emotionally and she took a slight sideways step in her social-positioning. The mirror provoked the participants into articulating their position towards immigrants. The central developmental contradiction was drawn to the surface and played out with the subjects' positioning towards their object and between themselves. Wendy's identification with Anna's discussion, presented in the mirror, served as an agentive pivot, opening up a new dimension of the concept of immigrant mothers and children. The dimension was that the mainstream position was explicitly articulated for the first time within the project.

In order to appease the emotional context, the participants were then asked to reflect on, and discuss amongst themselves, the most important events that had occurred within their Home-School project since the beginning (see task 6 below). This required going into the past and taking an imaginary walk to the present. The aim of this measure was to strengthen the emerging central contradiction voiced by Wendy previously. The historical walk-through created certain disturbances which were discussed but I felt that they needed time to reflect on these events individually and asked them to do so and to note down remarks in their diaries. At first they resisted stating that they did not have the time. Nevertheless, Victoria overruled the collective resistance stating that she often jotted down her thoughts and actions when she was working with children that needed special attention. This, she said was a good professional attitude to have. The group accepted to keep diaries on their thoughts after the sessions.

Table 3.4 - Task 6: Learning Activity. Grid for the historical process of the activity

Date	Action	Critical reflection
2004	a) Flyer asking for voluntary workers b) Funds c) Request for voluntary helpers	a) Flyer was accepted b) Funds were refused as it was said that the project did not give enough emphasis to integrating the mothers. It should therefore be funded by the canton and its education department. c) Made use of 3 people from SI
School year 2005-2006	a) New request for voluntary helpers b) New application for funds (3.06) c) Flyer was improved (10.2006) d) Evaluation of progress (10.2006) e) New discussions with schools in other municipalities	a) No responses. Made use of 4 SI people. (5 new arrivals in 2006) b) Refused on the same grounds c) Less complicated and an image added d) Difficulty to enter into contact with the parents due to language (solution direct them to language classes) - Problems with the work space (solution contact the schools again) - Problem with the way in which the mothers' perceive their children's education (?)
Present: School year 2006-2007	a) Use of media to contact voluntary helpers b) 1st workshop	a) 15 new <i>facilitators</i> (total =24) b) Many more problems are arising over work space, contact with parents and teachers, need for the project <b>Generally greater dissatisfaction</b>

## 3.5.5.4 Productive Activity 2 (19.12.2006)

The second workshop discussed the problems that the facilitators were encountering with their dyads. The solutions to the problems involved the facilitators' attitudes towards the immigrant parents, in particular the mothers. Cultural behaviour was an issue that raised discussion and was resolved through laying down the rules of the host society. The facilitators felt that it was

not their role to enforce societal rules to which the project holders responded by creating more rules. This measure created greater tension between the activities of the project holders and the facilitators:

Steven: *Yes it has to be understood that **when the child learns how to behave at home he will behave better at school and to his mother, and then the wife will be stronger in confronting her husband***

Facilitator Frank: *Yes we see that when the father is the authority at the home the son hits his sister and so it goes on*

Steven: *Here when we are speaking of school it has nothing to do with culture, and school says in the law that it gives the same opportunity to everyone and this is **what we are attempting to do to; help the parents to understand how they need to accompany their children at school.** The only reference that we have here is that of the law. In our environment we are not there to impose the question of religion or of culture, but school is for all genders and this needs to be respected. It is **not our problem if they do not believe in this here, it is like that, it is a law and there is no question about this issue***

Facilitator Frank: *I just don't know if we can do this... I mean they*

Thomas: *Look, can we just get on with the other issues to be dealt with... they have to do what we say as that is the way it is*

Facilitator Margaret: ***But we are being placed in the front line and this is not what we thought we were going to be doing***

Steven: *Look... we will find a way to deal with this but you have to be firm... **otherwise they will do what they want and there will be no discipline***

Steven is in charge of home-school relations for immigrants in the canton and he had a more empathetic view towards immigrant families from the beginning. However, he was well aware of the wider social tension that existed around the topic of immigrant populations and the caution that he voiced above comes from this knowledge and his experiencing of this knowledge and its societal contradictions. He translates his anxiety of the mainstream position on immigrant populations by enforcing the *rules of the house* and in this way slipped back into adopting the position of exclusion reinforced in the use of the words *they* and *discipline*. The other interesting thing that arose within this workshop was that the facilitator, Margaret realised that doing homework was not the main issue.



This workshop therefore did not make use of the proposed aperitif and the objective to install a feeling of trust between the facilitators and the project holders; neither did they present the charter that had been drawn up. The moderator stated that there had been a lack of time and other pressing issues needed to be dealt with. The way of interacting with the facilitators had therefore not changed, and it was still verbally directive and hierarchical.

#### 3.5.5.5 Learning Activity (SESSION 3 continuing the work on the mirror data and summarising main points) (25.01.2007)

The minutes of the previous session were read and a discussion turned to a mother whose child was put into a special care school, as they felt that the mother was unable to control him. The moderator stated that the *mother was fine*. I knew the mother and she had called me a week before as she felt desperate and needed medical help. I therefore took the opportunity to provoke a debate around the topic of *how did they know that the mother was fine*. This debate was once more an attempt to engage with questioning their activity in order to unearth the contradiction of the object and their activity.

Interventionist-Researcher (IR): *Her husband had left to work in Switzerland and the other children said that he did not have a father, so they said that he was the child of a prostitute and then he would hit the children and he was called up for violence. She said that it was much better here in Switzerland but that the child was angry in school and they took him and put him in a psychological centre in (name withheld) and said that she could no longer see her son. Maria was in tears when she told me this saying that they had taken her son away from her and that she had lost her son. She was really upset. She is now pregnant with a third child that she does not want but that she is intending to keep*

Steven: *Yes I know this story, I worked on the case. He arrived here at this school and the teacher contacted me and said that there were problems with this child. I began to work with him and she is fine*

IR: *What do you mean by the words 'she is fine?'*

Steven: *Well we are taking care of her*

IR: *How are you taking care of her?*

Victoria: *We placed her children in care centres and she is ok now*

IR: *Have you spoken to her about how she feels and what she is going through?*

Thomas: *No, we don't have time for everything we are teachers*

IR: *What is the object of your project?*

Thomas: *To get the mothers to understand how to take care of their children's homework and to become integrated into the society so that she can learn the way that we do things here*

IR: *In what way has Maria in this case becoming integrated, is she not acquiring hostility towards a system that has taken her children away from her?*

Victoria: *Well I had not thought of that I just thought that it was the best thing to do? It is true that no one has inquired into how the mother is?*

Steven: *We have always taken these steps in such situations, it is one of the rules of the department*

IR: *That is interesting but now we need to think of how we can work around these rules.*

Steven: *I am not sure that this is possible after all they have been put there for a reason. To help the teachers to confront difficult situations*

IR: *Yes but this does not mean that we cannot attempt to help the parents in some way, after all a mother and a child are not independent of each others' behaviour and well-being*

Steven: *Honestly they are not my concern and this whole thing is too complicated.*

Victoria: *She is right we cannot dissociate the mothers' well-being from that of the child*

Lilia: *I certainly don't feel well when my children are unhappy*

Taking the closure of this discussion as a spring board, I decided to return to the discussion that was held in Session 2 in which the central developmental contradiction began to emerge. A mirror of several of the facilitators' reflections on the mother's progress was projected onto the mirror board. The participants began to question how much they knew about the migrant mothers.

IR: *It appears to me that there is a problem here of understanding what exactly you define by the word integration and what exactly the mothers are living. Have any of you ever been in the homes of these mothers that you refer to?*

Steven: *No, I have not, but I have had some parents coming to the school to discuss their children's progress and problems and then I try to understand what they live in their everyday lives*

Thomas: *We see a lot of the parents in the special program meetings and **they are really not capable of keeping the situation together**. They are usually almost illiterate and some can barely sign their name; others are incapable of doing math or explaining science to their children*

Victoria: ***Actually there are a lot of Swiss that are the same**; we cannot forget that there is a supposed illiteracy level that is quite high as well as for math and science*

IR: *So when you meet the parents it is those that actually come to the school, so they have the time and inclination and those that have extremely problematic children, what about all the others? **Steven, are all those that come to find out about their children illiterate?***

Steven: ***No, I don't think so, they appear to be socially well-rounded***

IR: *So here we have the beginning of a new way of seeing the parents: they are not all illiterate. So I think that we should think about this and about the mirror data that portrays a mother that is not happy with handouts but would like to acquire agency, and the historical process, and see if something comes up. If it does I ask you to make a note for the next session. Actually, to keep a diary would be a good thing*

This discussion once more illustrates the possibility of a shift in the concept of immigrant mothers. The thread is, however, very weak and fragile. The idea behind my proposition was that people's changing of conceptions about material or ideal objects is not restricted to the sessions but is ongoing. The problem with this is that some thoughts get lost along the way unless a memory tool is applied, in this case diary entries.

The question of building trust was once more raised and this time it was decided that trust needed to be built with the heads of departments, the education system as well as the facilitators. Rules were still one of the principal concerns and appeared in various forms: rules for the teachers, the janitor, the facilitators and the parents. I asked them to write up lists of what they had achieved and what had not been achieved, and why. They argued that the lack of time was a prevailing factor for the project holders. They decided to overcome this with the help of a project secretary. A person from the controlling institution (name withheld) volunteered to do the job.

The discussion of the structural problems was important as it allowed the participants to step back and find refuge in something more mundane and practical. The conversation began once

more to blame the facilitators for their lack of understanding and so mirror data was then projected onto the mirror board. This data was taken from the Productive Activity's last meeting and consisted of three different readings of the facilitators' diaries.

### Textbox 3.2 - Mirror 2: Learning Activity: Three diary readings

(A) The little girl is fine but the mother has a problem which has nothing to do with her French...I read with the girl and it is going well...she is progressing well

(B) The mother has made a great deal of progress...she repeats all her son's words...she keeps his school case neat and opens it and takes out his books

(C) I am not able to get the mother to leave the house and so I go there and I do homework with the girl while the elder brother watches television and the mother makes me tea and cakes. I told her that it is not necessary but she really likes to do this and why should I spoil her fun. She spends all her day cooking for her family that is all that she has to do.

The facilitators' diary entries were discussed and it was decided that; A) The facilitator's relationship with the mother was impaired and had been from the start. B) The facilitator appeared to be encouraging agency at that moment but needed to teach the son to open his own school case and show his parents what he had to do for homework. C) The facilitator did the homework and appeared to fulfil the parental role within the activity. Reflecting on these diaries made some of the participants realise that they had never spoken to a migrant or refugee mother which is an important step forward in positions of empathy and an expansion of their former position. Victoria who was previously fairly aggressive towards the mothers, for example after the projection of the mirror data of the mother Anna above, adopting a position of denial here makes a reflective shift declaring that she had never met one of the immigrant children's parents and had not thought about this before as being problematic. Sarah who was usually very discrete within the sessions took the cue and reinforced that need to perceive immigrant mothers as being no different from any others. This was a radical step forward on a continuum of exclusion to inclusion towards a more empathetic and expansive perspective towards the mothers:

*Victoria: I thought about the discussion in the last session and jotted down some notes in my diary. The mirror data that we saw last time is actually rather troubling as I realise that I **don't know very much about the mothers at all** and I just have these ideas of what they live and how they react by listening to teachers' complaints and some intercultural and migrant*

*lectures that I have attended. I have never spoken to one of the mothers of the children that I work with in remedial classes. **I just send the child back to the teacher and she communicates my message to the mother***

Sylvia: *We need to change this. I get many mothers here in the language lessons and the sewing classes **and they are mothers as are any other mothers and we need to consider this***

Wendy: *Another thing that needs to be done is to find a way of helping the facilitators to understand that they are not to do the homework while the mother paints her finger nails but to help the mother to become involved in her child's school-going procedure*

The discussion led to how integrating migrant mothers was to resolve their perceived problem. It was taken as fact that the mothers were not integrated and that this was the cause of their children's low school performance. The system was once more not questioned and therefore the problem was not seen as a whole but rather as an abstraction from the whole. To my mind we had taken a step sideways which indicated that the developing thread was not yet part of the participants integrated perceptions and could easily be lost returning to the shadows forever.

IR: *What do you ultimately want to achieve through your project?*

Thomas: *We have just been telling you*

IR: *No, that is what you are working on. I want to know what you hope to have achieved by doing this project. You are working on transforming the mothers' way of navigating socially. Your motivation is to get rid of the problem brought upon you in your teaching due to migrant children*

Steven: ***What we want is to reduce the performance distance between our children and the migrant children***

IR: *Ok, so by integrating the migrant mothers you presume that their children will then perform at school. Is this right?*

Steven: *Yes, that is so. There are many articles that have been written on migrant or marginalised families and the negative effect that it has on the children's learning*

Thomas: *That is it, we are tired of all of these migrant kids that fill up the remedial classes and schools. **The parents need to get a hold on themselves and understand that they have an important role in their children's school work. They will understand this far faster if they mix more with us and find out how mothers from here are doing things. To accomplish this***

*goal we **need to tighten up on the project rules** so that everyone begins to collaborate and do what we say*

Once more Thomas returned to the solution of using rules to enforce a code of conduct. This is integral to assimilation models of acculturation. Furthermore, a general opinion in Switzerland is that socio-cultural rules and norms are appropriated by immigrants simply through contact with the mainstream population. What appears to be forgotten is that the reasons behind ways of doing things are translated from their previous ways of making sense of things, which could give rise to contradictory behaviour. At this stage I felt despair and began to monitor myself with my internal voice arguing that it was early days yet and I needed to be patient. At the same time I heard certain mothers appeal for help and their distress in my memory created a knot in my stomach. I felt that it would be better for everyone to live in harmony but was I being idealistic and if the participants did not move to a more empathetic perception of immigrant populations, or at least mothers and their children, then perhaps I was intervening outside of their Zone of Proximal Development and that of the activity. I brushed my doubts aside and listened to the debate once more **(these thoughts were noted immediately after the session and so are not precise)**.

Further discussion opened up a new perspective on integration, their project, and national socio-political boundaries. Some of the participants began to question this reality which aggravated the rift due to different forms of experiencing, levels of consciousness and life worlds. The participants find themselves in a double bind between wanting to assist the mothers in their integration process and wanting to maintain their own good socio-cultural cohesion within the wider society. One of the participants highlighted that the first video clip illustrated how the migrant families lived a constant double bind as they were told to behave properly but could not know what this meant as they were not active citizens within the mainstream society.

*Steven: Well we cannot actually tell the husband or the child that we would like to get the mother out of the house. If we had to say 'well it is to wake your wife up' they would slam the door in our face (much laughter). It is not actually hidden or cheating but I don't want to have my throat cut because I am taking his wife away... (laughter) and for that matter my wife would not appreciate this either (more laughter)*

Wendy: *We have to be careful about how we say these things: if we say that we are focusing on the opening of the family it means that they are completely closed and have no desire to open up (laughter) ...we are stigmatising the family that is already stigmatised as poor migrants and... I see it this way, as all we see is that the migrants do not want to integrate into the host society... But isolation is a really strong term*

Thomas: *Yes, but we have to be careful as the newspapers are quick to pick up these words and turn them into what they desire*

Victoria: *Actually, it depends on whether they are optimistic or pessimistic*

Thomas: ***We cannot afford to get bad reviews***

Georgette: *That we can't we have to get funding and the organisation has had a bad year*

Regina: *I will deal with that tomorrow first thing*

IR: ***So you are in a sort of a double bind***, on the one hand you would like to help the mothers to become integrated into the wider society but on the other hand the society does not really want this, so you cannot be open about what you are doing. *Did I understand this correctly?*

Steven: ***Yes that is sort of what it is***. We have to say that this is for the population at large as the problem is that there is a preventive and active political stance in Switzerland at the moment, but it is taking time to find the correct path. To strengthen the reception of the new arrivals and to see all these people integrated from the beginning is the subject of the projects of integration, and the Federal research projects on integration at the moment. We can say that integration in cultural festivities around food and dancing etc. works but when it comes to real integration there is a problem. Is it really the police's duty to go around examining what the migrants are doing in their lives... no it is not... this reads in red a culture of exclusion... we dream of a change but have no willpower to do anything about it... we only speak of Muslims and bombs and we don't speak of integration... 400, 000, 5% of the population, that is all. But if you exclude 6%, and stigmatise 6%, as we saw in the mirror data last time...well when there are 10% we will have an exploding bomb on our hands with no tools to deal with it. We spy on those that say negative things about the country and then we make sure that these people are eliminated. This function should be in the social services and not with the police. The way that it has been structured now makes people afraid, all those questions...they memorise the answers and give out the same stuff all the time... ***they can't say anything about their feelings or about the system as they are afraid of being sent back... it is really a fact that criticisms of the system are not taken well.. it is a very delicate situation... if we state that we are making the terrain fertile for integration and that they don't take the step then***

*they are going to be heavily discriminated... that is why they have to be agentive in their process of integration, but they are up against a system that does little to facilitate their progress, as we saw in the clip... they are always up against a double bind*

Wendy: *I want to tell you that after having been a refugee for 10 years it is really difficult to take a step forward. If we don't help them a bit then nothing will be done. If we actually implicate ourselves a bit then they feel that there is an opening and so they will move forward*

Frank: *Sorry... I mean sorry that you lived that*

This discussion represented a big shift towards expansive concepts of immigrant mothers. Steven had always manifested more concrete forms of thinking but here he really positioned himself against the abstract forms of thinking enunciated by Thomas through the articulation their collective central developmental contradiction. His outburst provoked Wendy's reflection on her own position as being the holder of a refugee status and her double bind of wanting to be accepted by the mainstream society and belonging to her family were articulated; on the one hand she voiced being an immigrant and on the other she still referred to immigrant mothers as *they*.

Their former list of what had not been achieved and why this had not been achieved indicated that they had designed a charter in which the facilitators were supposed to help the mothers to integrate by getting them out of their homes and into the wider society, but the mirror data of the last workshop revealed that the facilitators were not integrating the mothers but rather doing the children's homework. They decided that they needed to get the facilitators to work with clearer objectives in mind in general and to keep a focus on the project object of integrating mothers. Their new ideas were mapped out on the ideas board using the activity triangle as a support for their new germ cell (see Figure 3.18, Task 7 below).

The less contentious solution of creating a network between the communities of the different activities was readily accepted. However, that of expanding on the concept of migrant and refugee mothers was more difficult. Questioning their way of working on their object was accompanied by a rise in emotional levels and group fragmentation. One of the participants questioned whether the intervention was really necessary, in an attempt to side-step negotiating the topic of *what is integration*. The other members argued that the Change Laboratory intervention was needed.



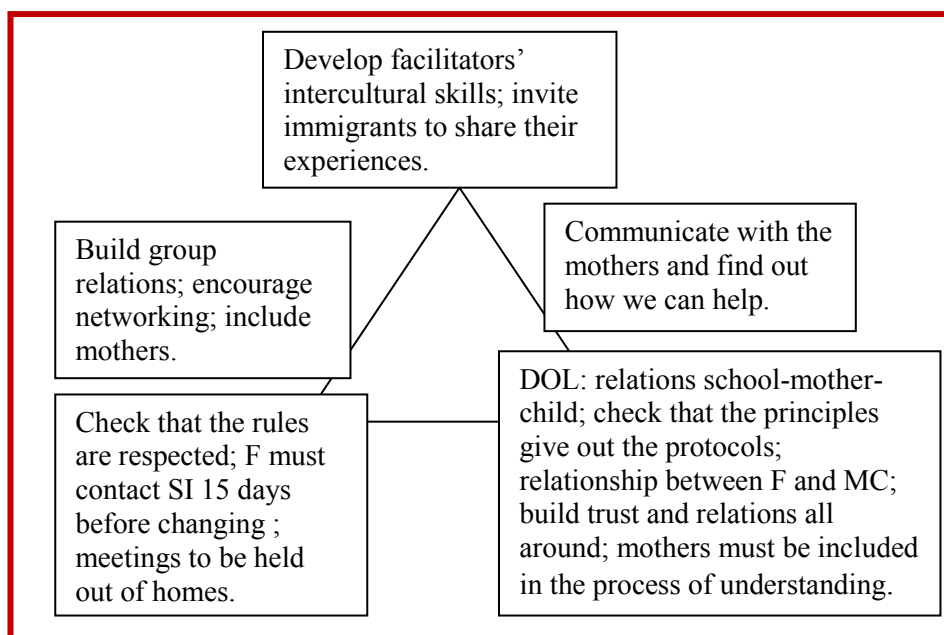


Figure 3.18 Task 7: Mapping out proposed steps on the Activity triangle

#### 3.5.5.6 Productive Activity 3 (25.01.2007)

The moderator opened the topic of how the facilitators were working and a heated debate began on the need to get the mother out of the home instead of doing the child's homework. The workshop was important and a common object began to emerge:

*Victoria: Take her out of the house so that the dyad is in a calm working environment*

*Facilitator Margaret: But we are... quite... peaceful*

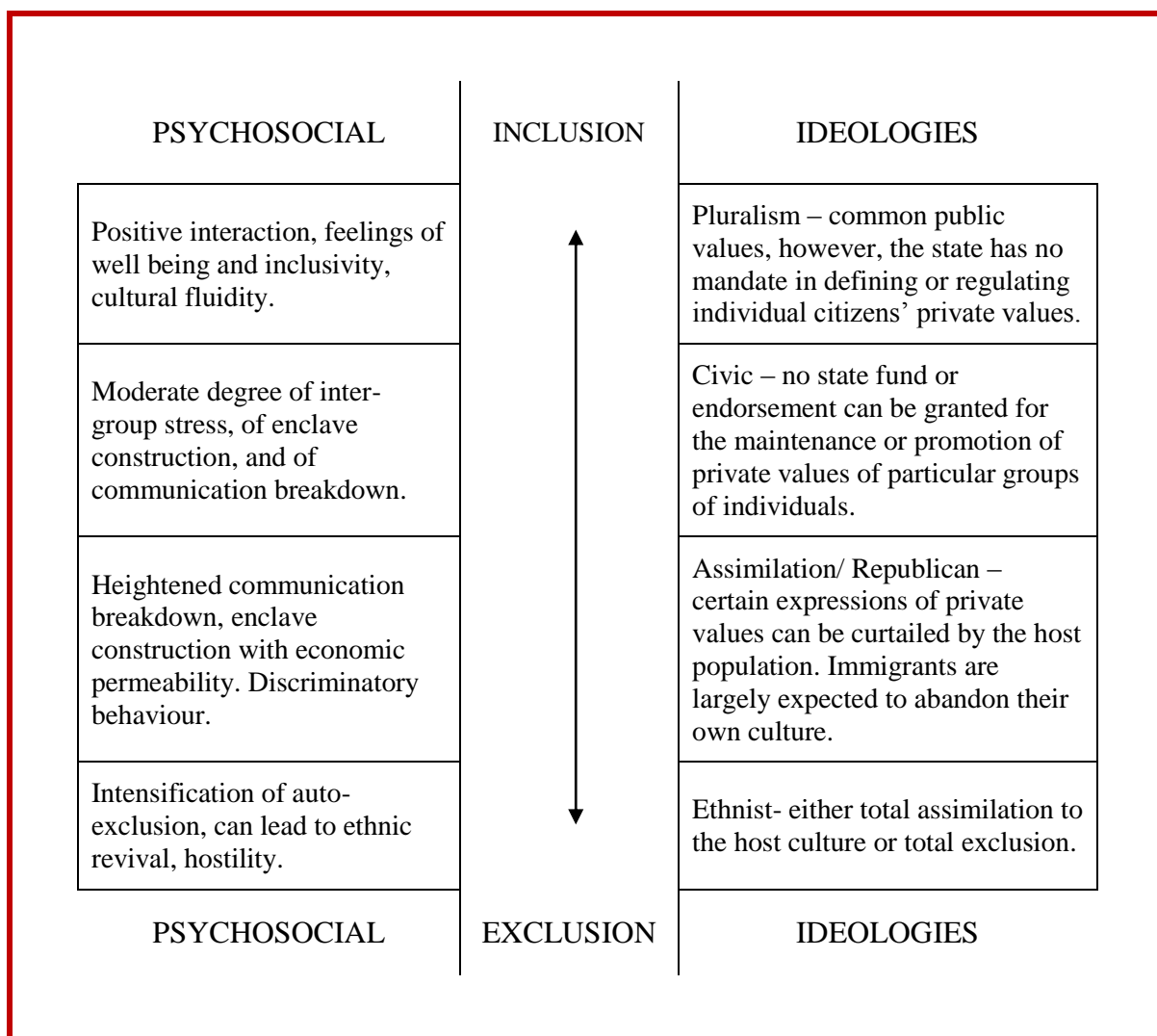
*Victoria: But the mother is not doing her work, she is making cakes for you*

*Facilitator Margaret: **The mother? ...Yes it is true that she does not do very much...she is there...I think that she would like to understand what is going on. But it is true that the work with the mother has not been done***

The researcher-interventionist used a verbal mirror to show how agency could be given step by step to and acquired by the mothers.

#### 3.5.5.7 Learning Activity (SESSION 4 Historical analysis) (1.02.2007)

The following secondary stimuli was used to provoke reflection and further questioning this was deemed necessary as the participants were only referring to structural problems



*Figure 3.19 Psychosocial wellbeing and political acculturation models (Newnham, 2006 adapted from Bourhis et al., 1997 and Berry, 1997)*

The structural problems came about after the minutes of the last session and workshop were read. The participants were asked to prepare a list of the major events of their activity since its beginning in 2004. There were three periods: 2004, 2005-2006 and 2006-2007. The events were only about structural changes: funding, tools such as flyers and new facilitators. Suddenly one of the participants said that they did not find this interesting and that they were troubled by the mirror data of the refugee mother's discussion on what she felt about integration. This led to a discussion of how the facilitators were not working on the object, integrating mothers into the wider society. The researcher-interventionist beamed an integration table (see Figure 3.19 above) onto the tools board and a discussion followed about what forms of integration existed and what consequences these had for the immigrants

wellbeing and then they extended these reflections to what their own socio-political context was. They were surprised that so many different integration models were used by nation states.

The use of the integration model that depicts various forms of acculturation on a continuum of excluded to included had quite a significant impact on the project holders. They began to speak of the central developmental contradiction where they wanted integration but that the society was not ready to accept a model such as pluralism:

Steven: *Well you said earlier that we were in a double-bind. We would like to work on integrating the mothers but the socio-political ideology does not allow us to do this openly, and so we are **hitting our heads against the wall***

IR: *Do you think that this might have something to do with the teachers' passive resistance?*

Thomas: *What do you mean by that?*

IR: *Well you have de-briefed them and given them written outlines of what is expected of them and still there is a communication breakdown*

Thomas: *I think that is taking it a bit far... they might have simply forgotten what is expected of them.*

Victoria: ***I am not sure that she does not have a point***

Lilia: *hmmm*

In order to capitalise on this moment of instability another secondary stimulus was projected to expand on the previous discussion (see Figure 3.20 below).

This model led the participants to question the conundrum that this type of system could produce for a migrant. Finally, another secondary stimulus was given in the form of a homework task. The participants were asked to situate their own socio-cultural and political ideology and behaviour in relation to integration for the following session. The secondary stimuli were presented in order to reduce levels of reticence to the topic of integration and to keep them away from the emotion and blaming that accompanied discussions on concrete perceptions of migrant and refugee mothers. Whereas the first model encouraged questioning of their socio-political system, the second model brought them back to their emotions, and they were then left with a support homework task to bridge the two.

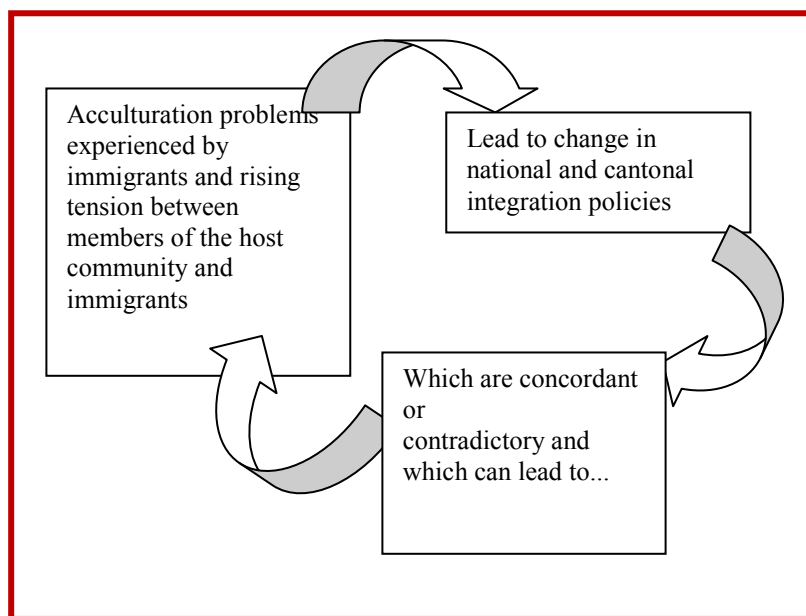


Figure 3.20 -Tool 2: Learning Activity. Bi-directional mechanisms of integration (Newnham, 2006)

An interventionist-researcher in a Change Laboratory takes part in the learning process (Engeström, 2009) and after the session Wendy and Victoria approached me. I understood through this discussion that they were well aware that I was as well part of the learning process:

Victoria: *I have never reflected on what we are doing when we speak of immigrant people. I suppose that you and Wendy have both suffered from the way in which we judge you on a daily basis and the way in which we try to protect what we think is so precious. What really gets to me is that in church we do not stop praying for others and how we should help the third world and those in trouble but we cannot even see what is on our own doorstep... Really I feel embarrassed at my initial reactions... I am really sorry*

Wendy: *It's ok Victoria we are all blind to things around us look at me I don't know where I am I have been playing a game since I was little... the tough white girl as though I could climb out of my skin (laughter and tears)*

IR: *Hey we are all learning every day and this is what is really important there have been many times in my life that I would like to have climbed out of my skin or run away from myself but that we cannot do*

While this conversation was not part of the Change Laboratory sessions development it cannot be understood as taking place only within the parameters of the sessions. Participants meet outside and discuss events with each other or others and this is part of the dynamics of development (Leontiev, 1978). This moment was a confirmation of the developmental shifts that were taking place during the session. Regardless of the research aspect it was a very warm and bonding moment for us all.

#### 3.5.5.8 Productive Activity 4 (8.02.2007)

This workshop was actually not as dynamic as it could have been. It was the last before the holidays and the participants of the Learning Activity were showing signs of fatigue. The facilitators had many problems with their dyads and they felt that they were powerless in the system.

Facilitator Joan: *When I read this sentence there is the teacher and the regional (M&C) coordinator and there are therefore two forms of authority, and **the mother and facilitator do not know who they are meant to place their confidence in**. I mean, really I insist on this, a **relationship needs to be constructed between the facilitator and the mother and for the moment we are only a 'trait d'union', a hyphen***

Steven: *It is up to you to contact the family and to create a relationship with the family. I don't know the families either but I pick up the telephone and call them*

Facilitator Joan: *But you are the authority, we are not*

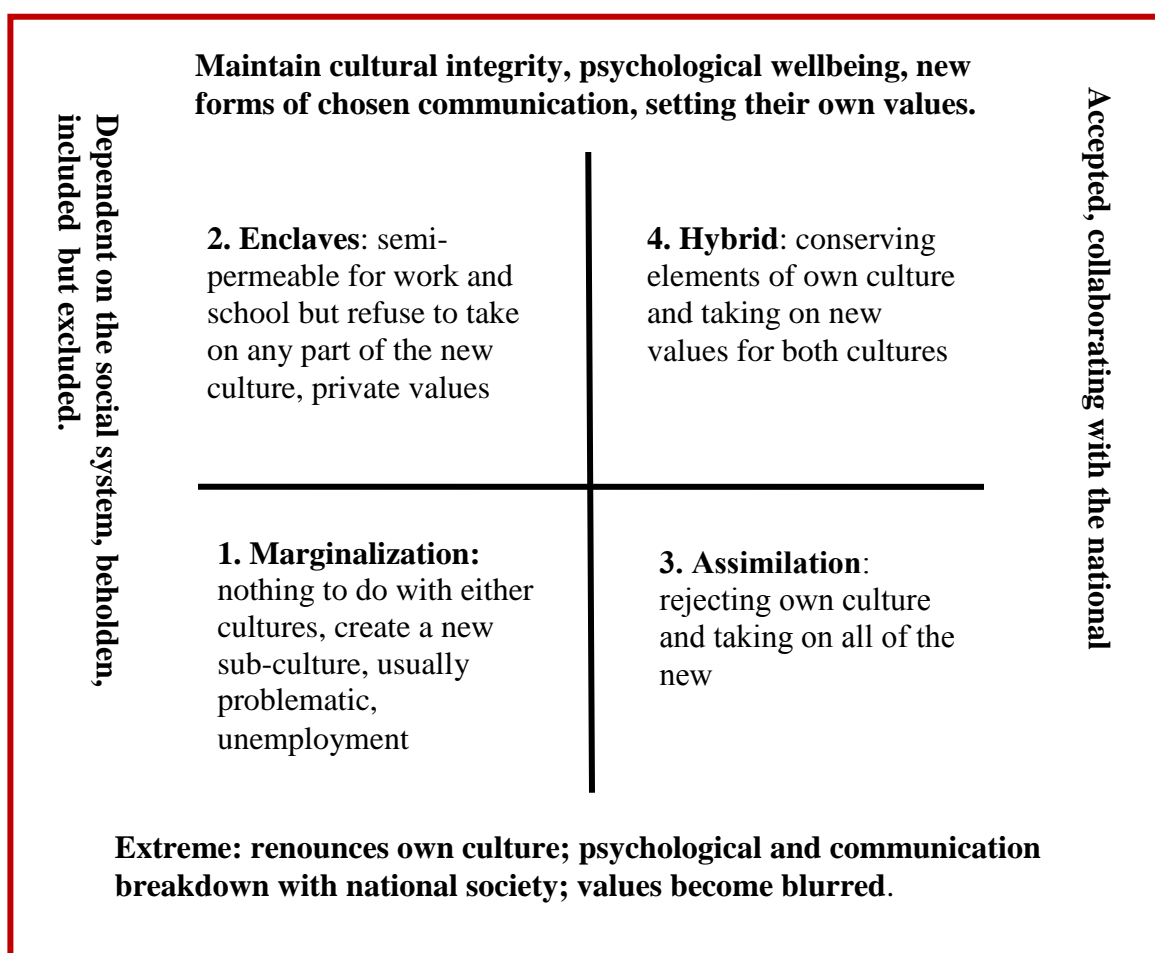
Facilitator Margaret: *I think that if you get into contact then there is no problem*

Facilitator Joan: *I just think that it is a triangulation*

There was a great deal of complaining and the facilitators felt powerless and confused as to what they were really supposed to do. Joan begins to appeal for a more expansive way of perceiving their work. She also places the mothers and the facilitators together in her opposition of the project holders. They asked for another appeal to be made for new facilitators. This was decided to be done through a radio broadcast. The project holders maintained that all solutions would be attained if they took the mothers away from their homes. However, this raised a certain ethical question in relation to their perception of what integration really entailed.

### 3.5.5.9 Learning Activity (SESSION 5 Reflecting on future possibilities, expanding on the central contradiction) (13.02.2007)

I began the session alone with the moderator Steven going over several problems that the mothers were encountering with the schools and especially teachers' attitudes. The other members arrived and the discussion turned to the minutes of session 4 before the break. Integration of foreign mothers remained their major concern which meant that they had now changed their perspectives towards integration and mothers. In order to expand on the previous discussion of methods of integration, the researcher-interventionist provided new forms of mirror data and a Four Fields that resumed the last session's discussion (see. Figure 3.21 below)



*Figure 3.21 Four Fields of integration possibilities*

I had previously sent out a questionnaire to expatriates and migrant parents. The questionnaires were in English and French. Some parents were aided by an interpreter from a

local interpreters' institution. The participants consisted of 20 people for each group and from different nationalities. Despite this the answers were 90% consistent for both groups. Meaning that those non-voluntary displaced persons were 90% in agreement with other parents of this group, which was consistent with the expats. What we can see is that the expats have a more lenient attitude towards integration, as did the displaced persons. *'We could discuss this point but I would like you to discuss on the grounds of this questionnaire what you might think the displaced persons attitude is towards integration and how they make sense of this'* (extract from Learning Activity session 5). This produced a discussion of how visible the beliefs captured in the questionnaire of immigrant parents were in the society.

*Table 3.5 Learning Activity: Results of the non national parents' socio-cultural values and behaviour.*

Participants	Religions	Food	Clothes	Formal education	Home education
<b>Displaced Parents (20)</b>	<b>Religion central. Special place in house for prayer</b>	<b>Buy food from traditional vendors/ home recipes</b>	<b>Try to keep clothes/ religious importance. Some change for integration/ children colours here are sad</b>	<b>School is good</b>	<b>They must not become bad like the others</b>
<b>Expat Parents (22)</b>	<b>10yrs education +3-5/ religion not important. UK yes</b>	<b>Home food is important at religious festivals and for the children but incorporate many host types as well</b>	<b>Children like fashion - for us adults we buy clothes when we go home they are better</b>	<b>We would like a private school</b>	<b>Integrity, loyalty and honesty. Children here behave badly</b>

As a result of the discussion that ensued, the moderator, Steven felt that they needed to re-evaluate the whole activity. They decided that they had to review the charter and the information pamphlet for the teachers and school heads. One of the participants felt despondent at the reality of their activity and stated that it was like *'attempting to move the (mountain) on a wheelbarrow'*. This session was an added step to surface the inner contradiction. The smaller developmental cycles were becoming more evident as the participants moved backwards and forwards between past ways of conceptualising immigrant

mothers, present debates within the sessions and future emerging ideals of a new way of doing things.

#### 3.5.5.10 Productive Activity 5 (27.03.2007)

During this session the information pamphlet for the teachers was presented and suggestions made. During the break the project initiators prepared a questionnaire for the facilitators, mothers and children. They were supposed to evaluate the progress of the project and to be used in obtaining an intercultural diploma. This questionnaire distracted the initiators from the object of their activity and, in order to bring the focus back onto this, the research-interventionist introduced a verbal mirror of the lives of one of the mothers.

Facilitator Arnaud: *Oh that is interesting as I did not know how to think about this woman. She seems really nice and is very friendly but I did not have the impression that she was doing anything to change her life here. She is just waiting for us to do everything*

IR: *Well Josephine has found employment cleaning chalets and this is quite a change for her as in her home country she had others to clean her home and she had her own restaurant. Her husband was also a very influential man until the political situation changed. She has gained 25 kilos here as the food is far richer and this does not make her feel very good. She bought a second-hand bicycle and goes for rides along the river but in winter she is very cold as her country is hot and so she finds it difficult to go outside. Her husband said 'what does she want to go outside for anyway, there is nothing out there'. He was implying that there is no social life, so the television is of more interest. She spends hours watching videos sent to her by her friends and family of their lives back home. She would love to see her parents but cannot go back for another 5 years*

Many voices: *That is quite a story, **we would like to have such contact with our mothers.***

Steven: *Well this is possible when you take them out of their houses and offer them a coffee or something. After a **while trust will build and they will speak to you about their lives and then you can help them to sort out some of their problems***

We can see that the possessive pronoun 'our' has been used here. This is perhaps not such a good thing though as it still implies a certain degree of paternalism. Just previous to this Joan also articulated a bonding between the mothers and the facilitators and what came to my mind



was just how is it possible to shift this perspective to one of where the mothers are seen as women in their own rights. The data led to a discussion around how interesting such insight was but no immediate actions were taken at this level of abstract thinking (see Jim's declaration below). Jim's positioning was reiterated by Margaret who supposedly bounced off his thoughts and revealed that she would have liked the teacher to see signs of her work and is once more losing sight of the mother's needs, placing her desires in the fore.

Facilitator Jim: *The father says that he is going to do a lot of things but I do not have the impression that this is real... or see any signs... and uh, and the mother understands **nothing but really nothing***

Thomas: *It does not matter, we are not here to replace the parents*

Victoria: *I am at that school every Monday and so I can just go and take a look at what is happening in the situation*

Facilitator Jim: *Yes, that might help, I feel a bit lost*

Facilitator Margaret: *I have a problem as well , the mother does not do anything with the homework when I am not around... it is not all the time but most of the time so what does the teacher see **when I have done the homework?** The mother signs everything but does not read anything*

Steven: *You are **not supposed to do the homework** but still I am sure that there is a visible sign when you support the child in his study and when you are not around. But you must remember that it is not only a homework support activity, but our main focus or object is to integrate the mother or at least to help her to find tools that will facilitate her integration*

#### 3.5.5.11 Learning Activity (SESSION 6 RENEGOTIATING) (20.03.2007)

This session was a critical point of the Change Laboratory. The participants manifested a lack of self-worth and self-esteem. They began to blame the facilitators as being obtuse. The researcher therefore asked for a confirmation of their adhesion to the Change Laboratory process, which was given by all this time.

*Textbox 3.3 - Mirror 3: Learning Activity: 'When I have done the homework'*

*Jim: The father says that he is going to do a lot of things but I do not have the impression that this is real... or see any signs... and uh, and the mother understands **absolutely nothing but really nothing***

*Thomas: It does not matter we are not here to replace the parents.*

*Victoria: I am at that school every Monday and so I can just go and take a look at what is happening in the situation.*

*Jim: Yes that might help I feel a bit lost.*

*Margaret: I have a problem as well, the mother does not do anything with the homework when I am not around... it is not all the time but most of the time so what does the teacher **see when I have done the homework?** The mother signs everything but does not read anything.*

*Steven: You are not supposed to do the homework but still I am sure that there is a visible sign when you support the child in his study and when you are not around. But you must remember that it is not only a homework support activity but our main focus or object is to integrate the mother or at least to help her to find tools that will facilitate her integration.*

*Margaret: In my case this is not happening the mother is an observer sometimes she sends text messages and files her nails pretending that she is interested but **she does not care at all**. I don't know whether the others here have this type of experience*

This episode was a sort of smaller cycle where I had to go back several steps. Whilst the tools used raised interesting discussion, they were abstract and not grounded in the activity itself. This enabled the participants to maintain a certain emotional distance from their object. I therefore picked up on the strong emotions and projected a primary stimulus (see video mirror 3 Texbox 3.3) of a discussion between the facilitators and the project holders that arose in the previous workshop, dealing with the topic of what parents were doing about the task of homework.

The mirror data provoked a discussion on how the project holders were to encourage the facilitators to understand that they were not to do the homework for the children but to help the mothers to know how to guide their children in the process. At the same time they empathised with the facilitators arguing that immigrant parents were not interested in their children's school going process leaving the work up to the school. I decided to juxtapose the mirror with a secondary stimulus (see tool 4), a summary of the results of a certain research carried out on parents' cognitions on how children develop knowledge. This stimulus was at the outset producing reactions of denial rather than expansion. Wendy once more attempted to open up the discussion in order to include other ways of perceiving the immigrant parents' perspectives. However, Thomas once more remained within the limits of the existing social system reinforcing his initial perspective.

Table 3.6 -Tool 4: Learning Activity: Parents' cognitions on how children develop knowledge

	Biological factors	absorption	Direct instruction	Observation	Experimentation	Cognitive organisation	Reinforcement
<b>American mothers</b>	high	middle	middle	high	high	middle	low
<b>Tanzanian mothers</b>	high	high	high	middle	middle	low	low

Tanzanian: Language learned through everyday experiences with siblings and peers/ absorption from exposure - other deliberate instruction.

Kenya: **Learning through observation and imitation;** Low reinforcement as they believe in knowledge acquisition as being a natural outgrowth of everyday experiences; Biological factors are of paramount importance as parents need to instruct but the child's ability to absorb is out of their control; Influence is from collective passing-on of knowledge - development is knowledge from the world to the child in a passive; automatic, natural basis.

American: **Genetic endowment and maturational readiness - individuality;** Active experimentation and observation; Deliberate instruction is of less importance than the child's individual experimentation in the world; Influence is from the media and theoretical education perspectives; Development is an active process - the child is mentally active, transforming and abstracting concepts out of experiences, creating knowledge.

*The information was adapted from the works of McGillicuddy –De Lisi & Subramanian (1994)*

Sylvia: ***Well I don't know what we can do with this...** if they don't see education the way that we do then we are never going to be able to do anything about the gap*

Victoria: *I don't agree, it will be a slow process but in the end they will realise that they need to be more active in their roles and that children are not passive learners, although I don't agree either that they are autonomous. **We need to guide them and set limits and punish and test.** Otherwise how are we to know what is going on and I mean well what is the point of, well of*

Wendy: *There are these schools... what do they call them? Rudolf Steiner or something, they have some weird way of teaching kids, some say it is very productive*

Thomas: ***We are not going to change our way of teaching in schools. This is not under discussion; it is the parents that need to align with the way that schools teach and to do what we expect of them,** otherwise the children suffer the consequences, as we well know*

However, as the discussion evolved a new direction grew. They realised that they did not know their *own cultures'* parents that well either. 'Parents' was a concept that had remained constant, and had rigidly defined boundaries, despite contemporary parents being involved in new networks of activities. In the conversation below, I attempted to provoke questioning of who Swiss parents were and how they demonstrated their interest in their children's school going activity. In other words, I attempted to collectively voice the non-voiced *Swiss parental model* that was perceived as being perfect. This form of abstract thinking needed to open up in order for that of the immigrant parents to shift towards one that was more expansive.

Steven: *We are not free of these kinds of differences even in our public schools the region of (name with held) have a large number of upper middle class young parents with very strong ideas on how children should learn; in fact, they tell the teachers how to do it and this is causing unlimited amounts of chaos*

IR: *Where do you think that these parents obtained their ideas on how children gain knowledge?*

Steven: *Well it must come from some books or something as they all seem to have the same approach*

IR: *What is their approach?*

Steven: ***Actually, I am not sure***

Thomas: ***They think that they know better than the teachers, that is all. Whatever the teachers do or say, or if they punish their spoiled brats, it is always seen as wrong and the kids are out of control***

IR: *So they don't believe in punishment: is this negative or positive punishment?*

Victoria: *Is there positive punishment?*

IR: *There are theories on this and on external and internal motivation to learning those sorts of things*

Victoria: *Of course, we did courses on this, but when it comes to the everyday it is more difficult to apply*

IR: *That is pretty universal*

Steven: *I think that these parents believe in internal motivation and reducing negative punishment, but in reality they appear to have lost control of their creative brats and they are running wild. The department had to intervene and called a meeting with all parents to tell them that school grounds were off limits to them and that they could not call teachers at home*

*to aggress them, etc. (silence) Look I don't think that we should let this thing get on top of us, but it is a problem and I have evening classes as well as the parents of children that don't assimilate French at school and I have to work with all these problems. And then there are these teachers that appear to deliberately be obtuse and insist that the foreign parents are stupid and low class and a bad breed and all sorts of other things (silence). When I am tired I feel like agreeing with them and then I say wake up what are you doing and a kid comes and takes my hand to show me his drawing of people dead and blood, he is only six, and I realise where he comes from (silence) such a gap, how to make them understand?*

So in this data we can see that there is once more a shift in the concept of good parents as being represented by the Swiss parents. This shift came about due to the model presented above, which led to a juxtaposing of the immigrant parents and the Swiss parents. This was understood as being a substantial shift towards more concrete conceptions of immigrant mothers. Steven is referring to the mainstream society at the end. The result was that the participants decided to apply for funding to provide courses for the facilitators on migrant and refugee people's ways of learning and their socio-cultural beliefs. The learning would take place through lectures and by inviting immigrant parents to participate in the workshops in order to share their experiences.

#### 3.5.5.12 Productive Activity 6 (12.04.2007)

This workshop began with a moment of silence for a refugee family that had been separated when they were deported, as they came from different countries and were married in Switzerland. The father had a son when he entered the country and left with his son that had been raised from birth by his new wife. They had two daughters who were sent back to Ethiopia with the mother.

The discussion then turned to the former Learning Change Laboratory session and the model of parental beliefs. The facilitators' debates were more positive after this input.

The workshop ended with the questionnaires. I was concerned about the questionnaire for the children as it placed them in a position of judging their parents' behaviour. The tone of the questions demonstrated the lack of trust that the project holders had for the migrant and refugee parents. My comments were aggressively rejected by Thomas however the facilitators

knew that they had to read the questions out loud to the children in front of their mothers and they had felt very uncomfortable. I refused to conduct the questionnaire with my dyads.

IR: *I am sorry, but there are some problems, have you taken a look at the length of these questionnaires and the language difficulty...there are going to be interpretation and projection going on here*

Thomas: *Stop! Stop right there, I do not want to hear one more word from you...*

Whispers: *She's right*

(later)

IR: *I think that a number of the questions are unethical ...they go against the object of the project... children gaining respect of their parents...certain of these questions incite judgment of the parents competencies*

Thomas: *We are not running an academic survey here... keep your academic stuff to yourself... we are practical people*

Facilitator Jane: *(whispering) Yes, that is true, and these questionnaires are impossible to fill in with the mothers, and the children are mostly too young*

Thomas: *You two stop talking*

Facilitator Margaret: *How many support hours is this going to take us? I do not have enough time before the end of the year*

Thomas: *I do not want any more discussion on this*

Much mumbling goes on as the facilitators bend down over their questionnaires

Thomas: *Are there any questions... no... ok, then I think that we can call it a day*

The interesting thing was that this conflict acted once more as a catalyst or spring board, and the facilitators' mumbled opposition was voiced in a later session.

#### 3.5.5.13 Learning Activity (SESSION 7 Mapping out the new activity) (10.04.2007)

This session was not very long as the participants had several other problems that had to be dealt with outside of the project. One of the most interesting extracts is here below where Victoria is articulating Switzerland's exchange value need of migrants and refugee people. Wendy is voicing her personal double-bind which is confirmed by Victoria and makes Wendy more aware of her predicament:

Victoria: *We do, otherwise we don't have anyone to make us look good*

Wendy: *And this is being translated by all sorts of negative behaviour towards them so that then we feel that our laws of exclusion are justified and we don't have to see them but they are accepted so that we look good... ugghh... and so our activity is riddled with worms as teachers are part of this thought, and oh (swears), well I am sort of not so bad as I was only born here (laughter)*

Victoria: *Oh no Wendy, you are not getting out of this one, you know that by living here from the beginning you are corrupted as you don't really know any other way of thinking*

Wendy: *That is not true, as my parents suffer from the system, but I have had times when I was very angry with them as they just or at least I thought that they didn't make any attempt to change their position. But after this CL I realise that it is not as it all appears, or well I did sort of know this in my head somewhere but it was easier to go with the rest. I mean, it didn't look good to support your parents against the system as it could have brought trouble. I mean, no one said this but we are all aware of this somehow*

Victoria: *Sorry Wendy, I was sort of just joking with you*

Based on the problems that arose due to the questionnaire and their former evaluations that trust was lacking between the different members of the activity's communities, which in turn was having repercussions horizontally and vertically within their division of labour, they chose to design a model for building trust by creating new forms of dialogue with the different stakeholders (teachers, heads of department, facilitators and mothers/ parents) (see Figure 3.21 below).

New tools such as information pamphlets and a new charter, as well as courses for the facilitators were added. Trust with the migrant and refugee mothers was to be achieved by the facilitators spending longer periods over time with each dyad and not only to do homework but also to act as a social advisor, by inviting immigrants to the workshops as interveners and providing courses on interculturality for the facilitators. The participants reverted to discussing structural problems and solutions far more readily than to their hidden object of helping mothers to integrate into the mainstream society. The central developmental contradiction was once more discussed and it was felt that if the project manifested positive results then this

would lead to the contradiction slowly being overcome outside of the project. The project holders began perceiving a possible generalisation of their very shaky germ cell and a more expansive way of perceiving the mothers was often replaced with rules and laws.

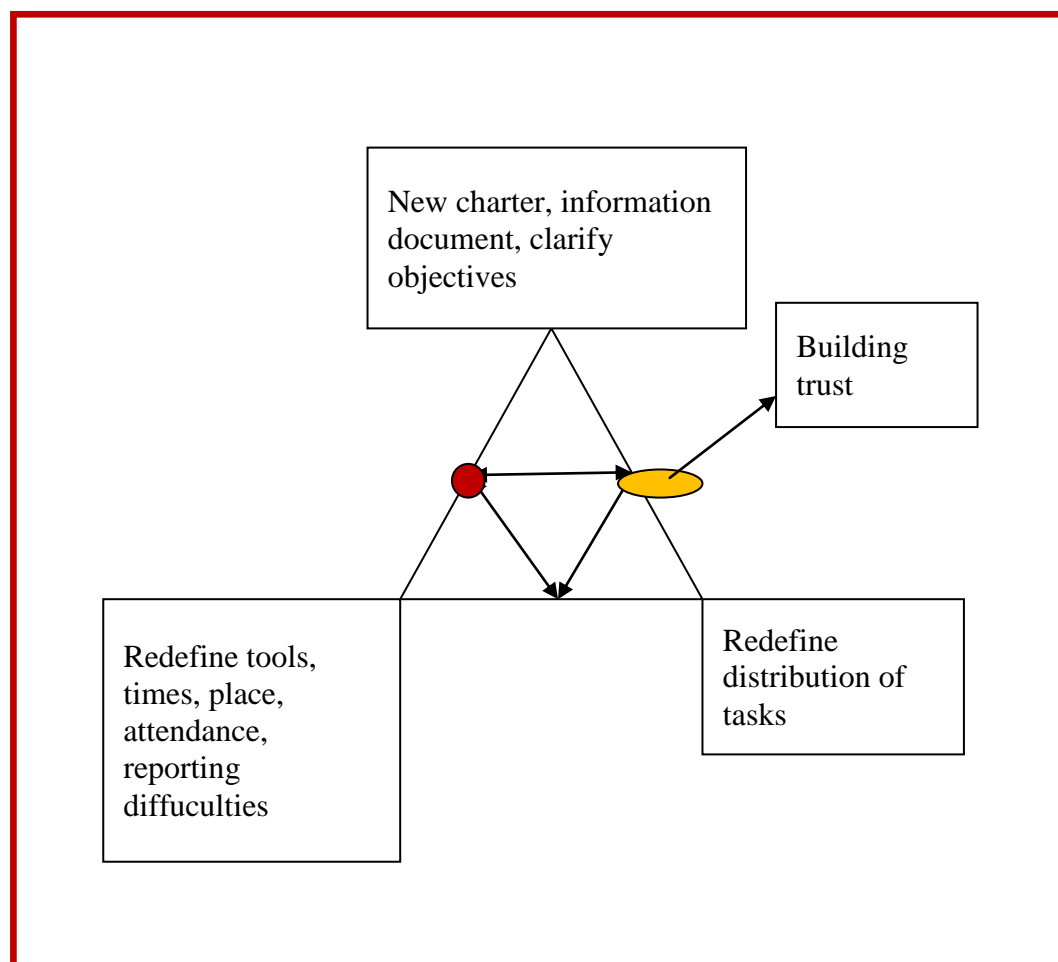


Figure 3.22 Task 8: Learning Activity: Mapping out an object of building trust

Visibilisation of the object was still shaky at this stage and the new ways of working are therefore to be seen as small steps rather than great leaps into unknown realms.

#### 3.5.5.14 The Productive Activity 7 (24.04.2007)

The new activity and all the changes made were explained to the facilitators. A facilitator began once more to paternalise her dyad in the discussion, and tension began to rise between the project holders and the facilitators. I inserted a verbal mirror of a textually illiterate family that supported their child's reading just by listening and asking questions. The facilitators



voiced the opinion that they would like longer periods with the dyads in order to socialise with the mother. This was a radical transformation from that of speaking as though they were *useless* to seeing that they were people of interest. Margaret actually used the mothers name instead of the usual *they* or *she*.

Facilitator Margaret: *The person over there (pointing to me) said that she has been with her dyad for more than 6 months*

Voice: *A year*

Facilitator Margaret: *A year then, whatever... I think that we all need more time. We cannot do everything at once. It takes a while to sort out the situation and then to find what she understands and for example with Jun, finding out what she is prepared to do*

Several voices: *We agree... yes... didn't know that was what we were supposed to be doing. We spoke of this once but nothing has been done*

Thomas: *It is no use getting too involved, we are only supposed to show them the way, not to take over their problems*

Steven: *How many of you have been with your family for more than 3 months?*

*(two lift their hands up)*

Steven: *When did you decide to do this? I thought that we had a rule that every decision had to be verified by (the immigration organisation) or one of us... whew... hard to get through. It appears that we need more time. This is up to you to judge, but before taking the final decision you are required to discuss this with the mother and the teacher and then to contact (the immigration organisation) and find out whether this is feasible due to the waiting list of other children needing help*

Thomas: *If the mother is not making any effort there is no point in carrying on with the intervention*

Victoria: ***We have to be careful here how do we decide that the mother is not making any effort. We heard what (the researcher-me) said about different perspectives on how children acquire knowledge, so how do we know that she isn't just behaving in accordance with her beliefs?***

Several voices: *They don't make an effort... happy that we do it ...nice*

Steven: *Good, we must keep to the protocol. We need to systematise this meeting with the parents and Victoria's suggestion is a good one. We can do this in two stages: first, the RC will present the facilitator to the teacher and sort out the room and the key and times, and*

*have a short briefing on the child's behaviour and the mother's attitude then we will present the facilitators to the families*

This was the beginning of a new germ cell where the concept of immigrant mothers began to become more concrete. Victoria's contribution was as well a radical change from her former ways of speaking of the migrant and refugee mothers.

Learning Activity (SESSION 8 Focus back to initial object - reinforcing the developing new model) (22.05.2007)

There had been a shift in the collective spirit of the subject of the Learning Activity. In the first two sessions they were fairly fragmented each with a fairly different agenda and differences in how they defined the object of their activity and the perception of immigrant people in general. After this a collective binding began to form through questioning and remodelling their activity. However, as the primary contradiction gave way to the secondary contradiction, the tensions rose once again as the anxiety of generalising their emerging new activity loomed. In order to bring this shift to their attention I presented a mirror, a video clip (see mirror 4) of an incident that took place in the seventh workshop.

*Textbox 3.4 - Mirror 4: Learning activity: abstract thinking- 'type of mothers' intelligence'*

Facilitator Margaret: Uhh the mother that I work with told me that the Swiss are racist.... that made me angry why do I have to spend time trying to facilitate their lives when they have these opinions about us  
 Other voices: yes  
 Steven: I understand... yes I think that the debate is forcing us to take a stronger position we cannot work in an environment that is unclear for everyone they need to make a choice.  
 Thomas: I would not take this too seriously you should take a look at the type (form) of the mother's intelligence...  
 Agitation in the group and coughing  
 Thomas: there is a point where there is no more point to write about intercultural it is just an issue of non-compatibility and that is where it starts and stops  
 (Silence 50 sec)  
 Steven: they live a difficult situation they do not have many weapons to change their destiny they are constrained by the system.

This primary stimulus prompted very strong emotional reactions:

Georgette: *I did not notice this little episode, how did this happen?*

*(silence)*

Wendy: *I think that we were busy with some of the paper work at the time that this conversation was held*

Victoria: *I remember, but Steven intervened and took the attention away and I forgot, but it is a problem*

Wendy: *Basically this makes me angry. What is this supposed to mean? How am I to take this kind of thing? I think that one of us has to seriously ask himself some questions as to what the hell is going on around here. How can we preach integration and then have this kind of discussion?*

Steven: *I think that we need to take it as a slip. Thomas what have you got to say about this?*

Thomas: *I have had enough of all the moaning. Why not just say it the way it is? We keep on with this theory, but it is a good thing; it fills a job specification and allows for research that is at the moment asked for around this part of the world. But we all know the reality*

Wendy: *I can't believe what I am hearing. Did you fall on your head or have you been converted by the (central right political party)? I thought that you were socialist or green, and you actually are a candidate. You make me want to be sick*

Georgette: *ok let's step back*

Further discussions led to the questioning of what actually was meant by *integration*:

Wendy: *I am tired of this notion of 'integration'; we throw it around and no one knows what it means. I am going towards the Activity approach that (the researcher-me) has been showing us. I am tired of these useless top-down ways of dealing with other people's lives as though there are quick-fix solutions to all the **pain that many of us people have endured**. We need to go into the families and to see what their real needs are and work out from there. The researcher (me) is right Thomas, it is no use trying to shut her up*

Thomas: *Look, I did not mean to be aggressive. I am sick of the continual pressure that these problems bring on us as teachers and I think that we were doing things the way that they should be done. We need to follow the rules and guidelines set up by the department*

Wendy: *Oh yeah! We are meant to be doing integration **and we don't even agree as to what this means**. Thomas, you have this notion of some type of book word that has nothing to do*

*with real life. And then you shout at the researcher (me) telling her that we don't need academics here*

Thomas: Wendy, *I think that **you are overstepping your place***

Wendy: *Oh so what is my place, back in Somalia?... and if it is here... since when are you in charge? I thought we were working together but you appear to think that you are the only one that knows what integration means... well actually you don't, as you have never lived outside of this very small town... I am sick of this pretentiousness*

Victoria: *That is enough, we are tired, this bickering is not going to get us anywhere*

Wendy, *I sympathise and attempt to understand how you feel but obviously I am on the outside and could not know what it **really feels like... I am sorry I feel stupid and powerless against this system***

Steven: *Me too... uhhh... Some of the questions were helping the child to have power and therefore going against the object of the project to help the mothers to have agency. I seriously did not think that the children would use this power of speaking French against their parents*

Wendy here is side stepping her former rejection of her socio-political position as she once more voices the 'pain' that immigrant populations go through. Steven is uncomfortable and fidgety and brings the questionnaire back into the conversation as a way to move away from the emotional conflict.

In order to break away from the strong emotional content of the first stimulus, I proposed working on their new designs. They divided into two groups: the first group worked on the new information pamphlet and the new charter. The second group worked on the courses that could be proposed for the facilitators and how to go about inviting migrant, refugee mothers and other immigrants to attend the workshops.

**Wendy: You know Steve, I think that it would be great to invite some of the people that I know that are doing great things here to come and tell us how they went about getting around the blockers**

Steve: *that is a very good idea we can already invite someone for the workshop after the break and we need to invite a mother as well so that she can tell us about her needs instead of us*

*imagining everything (pause) and actually they come from such different situations so they probably all have different concerns and we just lob them together*

*Victoria: The other day I went to buy Indian to go and I was chatting with the owner who told me that he had a person that cooked a lot of the food at home and then brought it to him. He said that she was from Sri Lanka I could ask him to contact her for us*

*Lilia: I have heard of her as well she really makes delicious pampadams*

*Frank: ok so I know where to go tonight (laughter)*

#### 3.5.5.15 Productive Activity 8 (7.05.2007)

The workshop began once more with the project holder asking the facilitators to present the problems that they were encountering in their dyads. The facilitators repeated the need for more time with the dyads in order to get to know them better and to work with their needs. This was a real breakthrough and the facilitators here manifested developing concrete thinking of the mothers as people that could contribute to their socio-cultural environment rather than as people that presented problems. However, prolonged contact with the mothers could once more lead to the facilitator becoming paternalistic and so the discussion turned to how to draw the line and decide that the relation needed to stop. This was not simple as, unfortunately, if agency was not established for the mother then dependence was created.

*Facilitator Jane: Yes, that is what the man said, we have only one hour and we cannot do the homework and integrate the mother.... I have not spoken to the mother about this but I am only beginning to understand what is going on. I have spoken to the psychologist and the social workers and I suppose that there is a moment that I should take away the crutch, but if she does need my help again she can contact me*

*Steven: Yes, that is true. There is a moment that you will need to cut the umbilical cord and to say that they have to fly with their own wings. How many of you think that you could see the family for a period of two hours and more often during the week? But to be honest I don't think that it is possible to start asking the parents to do more. The other thing is that we start by seeing them a lot and then cannot keep up the rhythm and we let them down. It is also important to see what the mother feels and if she is doing her part, or am I the one that is actually doing all the work. Try to know what the mother is doing. Is she actually investing an*

*effort in the meeting or is it just you that is doing the work? We are not rigid but we will not be the crutch forever, and they will have to take over*

### 3.5.5.16 Learning Activity (SESSION 9) (4.06. 2007)

They elaborated on new designs and the former activity with the object as trust. It was decided that this would be their guiding *ethos* for the following school year. The new models of the activities would be completed and implemented as tests in the new school year. The participants discussed the new form of their activity that was to be expressed in the Home-School project charter that would be distributed to all the necessary stakeholders at the same time modelling it onto the activity triangle on the future ideas and tools board:

Victoria: *I think that the principal thing now is to build trust between the facilitators, the mothers, the teachers and us. The only way that we can do this is to create tools that are coherent and all-encompassing. So for the charter we decided that the facilitators need a code of ethics; they need to be voluntary besides us paying for their transport costs; they must care about integrating migrant families; and they should be a living example of the (M&C) project (turns to Steven) What did you mean by that?*

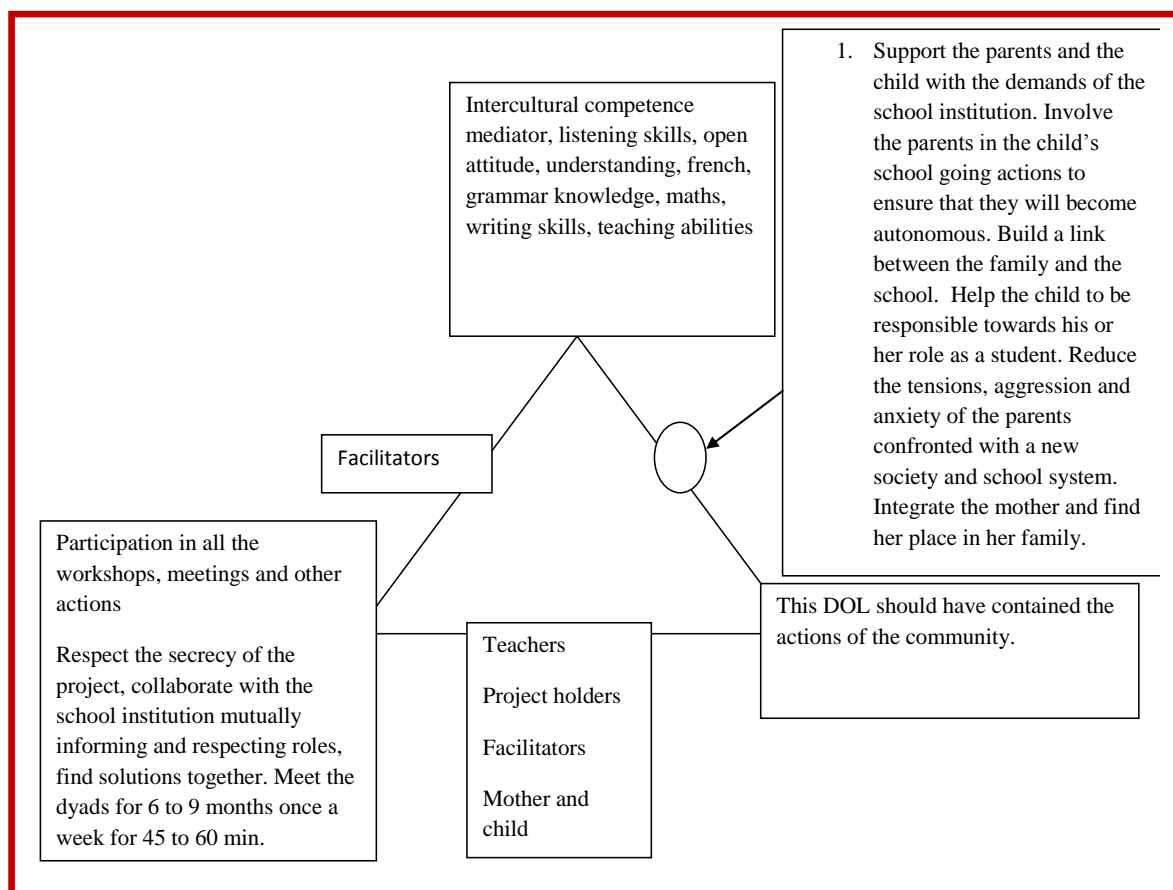
Steven: *Well they need to understand what we are doing and to enact this in their contacts, not to interpret the relations the way they want, for example by playing doctor or psychologist. One of the facilitators was literally giving homeopathic medication to one of the mothers we cannot have things like this going on*

Victoria: *Ok, uhhmm, they should demonstrate a concern for integration particularly in the school arena through their act of speaking, listening and by having an open attitude, they will guide the mothers in their role. **They must keep the mothers informed, reassured and create trust so that the mothers feel reassured and confident to take on a new role as mother and educator.** They have to accept to maintain an oath of secrecy*

Steven: *I will do the next step. Their role is to reduce the **tension and the aggressions that the families experience with the schools and the teachers.** They should reduce the tension and aggression that the families experience with the schools and the teachers. Oh, I have already read that. They should reduce the **family's isolation by taking the mother out of the home.** They need to collaborate with the regional head of the M-E project and the teachers and social services. If the mother needs help at the doctor's or something, they should be prepared*

*to go and translate. Ok, the next thing is to keep the partners informed at all times about any important evolution. Teachers can contact them when meetings are held with the parents*

The participants modelled their future activity onto the activity triangle below (Figure 3.23).



*Figure 3.23 Task 9: Learning Activity: Modelling the new activity*

It was of great importance, manifest in his repetition of the word, for Thomas that the rules were maintained. It appears in this abstract below that Thomas empathizes with the immigrant families and is concerned for their wellbeing however his reference to reversed roles, where immigrant children have to be the adults in the new society, made me aware that this was not a shift but a confirmation of his former position.

*Thomas: Rules, they must transmit the rules; what it means to be a parent today, the role of the migrant parent towards school, what the school requires of them and their children. The facilitators need to know how to speak to someone who is from another culture as well as*

*cultures and meanings of cultures, and immigrant families, their dilemmas and those of their children, for example, the problem of reversed roles and how to get away from this. They need to be know what the migrants need to know to live here and how to communicate this to them, and they must tell them what laws and rules need to be obeyed*

*Lilia: hmm live here... that's it*

*Steven: (sighs, looks at the page in silence for a moment). They are there to help the mother to take responsibility for her child and the child's school going activity. And finally they are not to take the parents' place but are there to guide them*

*Georgette: I will do the next one. The personal development of the facilitators: they need to assist in all workshops and they should participate in all integration courses proposed by the project*

#### 3.5.5.17 Productive Activity 9 (14.06.2007)

This was the first workshop where the facilitators bonded and spoke of we:

*Facilitator Simone: But I am afraid that she will close up again if I stop now*

*Thomas: The schools have many ways of being able to help children that are in difficulty; there are special institutions if the parents don't make enough effort*

*All: (sigh)... Oh no!*

*Thomas: We are not in a position to judge*

*Facilitator Simone: Look I am sorry but if*

*Thomas: This is not a discussion that we should have now so please stop now*

*Facilitator Simone: Look, we don't agree with the way that you think. I think that a new way of perceiving this is like a surge of oxygen... the mother is so blocked... is her life to be reduced to doing washing, to turn around in her little social space*

They argued that they had not been heard and that the mirrors of the mothers' lives were very helpful and that they would like to change the way that they were working. They decided to give 45 minutes of homework support and then to take the mothers for a drink in town. This meant that the two activities had begun to bond and that a new germ cell was being designed for the productive activity that could be elaborated upon within the new school year.



The bonding and questioning of the Productive Activity came really late, but as they were not in a Change Laboratory set-up and only received weak double stimulations it is not surprising. Moreover, it strengthens the argument for a rigorous and well-designed Change Laboratory with primary and secondary stimuli throughout the process.

#### 3.5.5.18 Learning Activity (SESSION 10 Discussing the results of the sessions, adapting the experiments and refining the model) (13.06.2007)

The session was short as everyone desired to have an *aperitif* and I presented the table 3.6 below as an evaluation of the dynamics that took place within the sessions. (This structure of this table was presented by Engeström and Sannino at ISCAR 2010). The participants then evaluated, rather briefly, what had happened throughout the process and chose to maintain the new designs and to implement them. They also chose to accept the propositions made by the facilitators, and it was said that they should give them more space to ‘*choose how to work with the families*’.

This was a boundary-crossing Change Laboratory as there were more than several activity systems involved in the process, working towards a common object. Engeström’s first principle (see chapter 3) was addressed in that it was a collective, artefact-mediated and object- oriented activity system seen in its network of relations with the Productive Activity and peripheral activities such as teachers, department of education and the mothers. The dynamics of these project holders Learning Activity and the Productive Activity system was taken as the prime unit of analysis.

The second principle is that of the multivoicedness of the activity system where the communities always hold multiple points of view due to the division of labour and individual sense-making. Thomas’s outbursts within the Learning Activity significantly illustrate individual-collective sense making. However his collective social perceptions were driving his behaviour at most times within the session. It was my role as an interventionist-researcher to facilitate the participants’ conceptualisation of this and while at times it appeared possible, at others it was not. This problematic shall be discussed in the final conclusion. Multivoicedness was further represented in the form of an immigrant person who had personal experience of integration. Her input and developing consciousness aggravated the central developmental

contradiction, raising levels of emotion, and led to violent confrontations with Thomas. Actions of multivoicedness were also identified between the activity systems as they negotiated their perceptions of their object and the way that they could transform it. Therefore I argue that multivoicedness can be analysed at two levels; that of the individual-collective and that of the activity systems and their object. This discussion shall be elaborated in the next chapter.

Engeström's third principle of historicity, and that activity systems get transformed over long periods of time, needs in this case to be seen as a national and cantonal movement towards integration that took place over 250 years and had its essence in small social voluntary projects such as the Home-School project. These intensely fossilised forms of thinking and behaviour are difficult to transform and Thomas's reactions attested to this. On the other hand, Wendy was an immigrant person and a woman, and lived several socio-cultural environments, which I argue meant that she was not connected historically to the socio cultural environment of the participants of the Home-School project and so her consciousness was different, was formed of her experiencing within different activities (Leontiev, 1978). This debate shall be further articulated in chapter 4.

The fourth principle is the central role of contradictions as being a source of change and development. The contradiction pervades all elements of the activity systems. The emotions that arose when the contradiction began to surface were electric within this Change Laboratory. Integration is a taboo topic in public spaces, creating tensions and double-binds for all that transgress the line. The central developmental contradiction of use value and exchange value of the immigrant populations was brought to the fore, in particular through the repositioning of Wendy during the sessions towards her status as an immigrant person. This brings us to the expansive possibility of activity systems in the fifth principle, encapsulated in a shift of the remaining participants in the Change Laboratory as they followed the collision between Thomas and Wendy, and in the workshops through presentation of data of more concrete forms of thinking of what it is to be an immigrant mother.

The Home-School Change Laboratory process is summaries in table 3.6 below. The new germ cells and new concepts indicate a positive outcome however, to be sure of how and what went on an analysis of individual-collective shifts needs to be carried out.

Table 3.6 Dynamics of the Home-School Change Laboratory process

Contradiction	Conflict of motives	First stimuli	Second stimuli	Germ cell	New concept
Desire to maintain national sovereignty vs need for international coalition and foreign labour	Tools for facilitators	Mothers' need to earn a salary	Map out original H-S charter on activity triangle	New activity model based on the concepts of creating trust and empathy between and within the networked activities	Concrete thinking and expansive actions with immigrant mothers and networking
	Including or excluding mothers	Facilitators' diary entries	Diary entries		
	Voluntary situation or expansive situation	Doing the homework	Problems on activity triangle	A second germ cell for the special education teachers to include mothers in discussions and to find solutions to their children's difficulties	Building trust with immigrant parents and all stakeholders
	Doing homework or integrating		Model of forms of integration		
	Abstract concept or concrete concept of immigrants		Vicious circle of integration model		
			Parents' socio-cultural values chart		
			Parents' cognitions on education chart		

I shall now critically analyse and synthesise the data held during the presentation (above) of the Home-School Change Laboratory in an attempt to articulate the need for subject positioning within analysis of the Change Laboratory process. The motive of this reconceptualisation of the premises of the Cultural Historical Activity theory is anchored to the possibility of utilizing the Change Laboratory methodology in groups of disempowered people. The data that will be analyzed in the following chapter is once again only a chosen part of the whole bank of data and of the data extracts used above. Once again only a few participants voices are used, those that I felt were the most relevant to my research questions and to articulating the discussion that follows.

## CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS

Confronted with an integration conundrum and driven by Cultural Historical Developmental theories, I questioned whether the restricted categorisations of immigrant mothers and their children (developed by the members of two groups participating in a home-school project in Switzerland) could change to become more empathetic and expansive. In other words, when provided with the appropriate stimuli during participation in a Change Laboratory could the participants break away from historical, social and politically formed abstract categorisations to include concrete, elaborated conceptions of immigrant mothers and their children? I adopt the term *expansive* instead of *inclusive* as the latter defines a situation in which people are once more included into another set of categorisations and in opposition, expansive forms of thinking exclude boundaries (Appiah, 2006). Furthermore, I questioned whether Cultural Historical Activity Theory could include the analysis of subject positioning or individual-collective meaning and sense making as advocated by Vygotsky (1987) or is it limited to pursuing a transformation of the collective material object. I accepted this challenge as Engeström (1987) purports that participants in Change Laboratory undergo high levels of emotion, resistance and conflict which need to be negotiated and overcome by resolving the central contradictions within the activity, however, to date the work of he and his followers focused mainly on the collective material production of the activity neglecting the individuals experiencing and thereby reinforcing an ongoing debate over the relationship found in the works of Vygotsky and Leontiev (see for example, Koshmanova, 2007; Santiago-Delefosse, 2012).

The following discussion does not attempt to engage at length with the already well covered debate on Vygotsky and Leontiev, that is on the premises that constitute the Cultural Historical theory and Activity theory, but rather to adopt a synthesis of the two as proposed by Axel (1997) with an accent on subject positioning (Daniels, 2005) as I maintain that by only pursuing the transformation of the material object in order to track development, as found in the works of Engeström (1987, 1999), half of the story remains untold (see Lektorsky, 2009; Edwards, 2009, 2010; Daniels, 2011; Daniels & Warmington, 2007; Miettinen, 2005 and Stetsenko, 2005). I agree that participation in shared activities is the necessary condition for people to achieve mutual understanding but this is not necessarily the outcome. For example, white

slave owners and black slaves both collaborated whilst working with cotton but they did not share the same meanings and sense making of the activity.

Vygotsky (1978) wrote that the word's sense is located in a person's inner speech. It is internal and is the aggregate of all of the psychological factors that arise in our consciousness as a result of reflecting on the word. Sense, he maintains, is dynamic and fluid, it is non static it continually evolves, changes form and relates to several zones of meaning. A meaning is therefore only one of the zones of sense. Meaning is more stable and communal, sense is more personal. An individual's personal sense changes through the act of experiencing, in all its forms, with historically constituted social, cultural and political artefacts. Furthermore, Vygotsky (1978) added that while tools are oriented towards changing the object, signs are oriented towards mastering one's own psychological activity (see Vasilyuk, 1988) and that higher psychological functions refer to the "combination of tool and sign in psychological activities" (p.55). Although Vygotsky and Leontiev did not concur on whether sense or meaning should be the unit of analysis (Zinchenko, 1990), this thesis tracks a participants' personal sense making, experiencing (Vasilyuk, 1988) in a shared collective activity as proposed by Engeström (1987) as the unit of analysis. The following analyses rely on the participants' discursive actions, a combination of signs and tools, to track their psychological development on the topic of integrating immigrant mothers and their children into a society that maintains socio-cultural hegemony.

I use the term *socio-cultural hegemony*, as proposed in Marxist philosophy, to describe the domination of a socio-culturally diverse society, in this case due to the arrival of immigrant populations, by the ruling class. The Swiss nationals themselves manipulate their own society and those of the immigrant groups, their beliefs, explanations, values and more in an endeavour to promote the Swiss nationals way of being as a legitimate worldview. As a legitimate social, political and economic status quo that is natural and beneficial for everyone rather than an exploitative society that makes use of immigrants as cheap labour. Gramsci (1992) in his collection of *Prison notebooks* maintained that these norms should not be perceived as natural and should be overcome by recognition of the artificiality of their premises, of their philosophical roots as instruments of socio-cultural dominance. The Change Laboratory intervention provided semiotic tools to the participants in order to facilitate their questioning and reformulation of their socio-cultural praxis.

Data acquired during the Change Laboratory sessions are video recordings that are transcribed to produce a large bank of discursive text. It makes sense to wonder what type of content is embedded in the discursive acts produced during the sessions. Semantic networks, states Halliday (1972/2003) present a “hypothesis about patterns of meaning” (p.334). Patterns of meaning and sense making are an interesting way to perceive this data as it aligns with one of the central premises of the Cultural Historical theory. In her book *Ways of saying: Ways of meaning* Hasan (1996) maintains that it is necessary to perceive semantic networks as being composed of “how meanings construe the distinctive attributes of context” (Hasan, Cloran, Williams, Lukin, 2007, p.716) and furthermore that, language and society need to be studied in an integrative way in order to “deepen the understanding of the relationship between language and society” (Hasan, 2009b, p.14). Despite her considerable contribution she does not elaborate on how the analysis should be undertaken and instead proposes that “the adoption of a linguistics that in its design does not militate against the aims of integrated sociolinguistics will make the task easier and free of contradictions” (p.38) Furthermore, her quest to apply linguistic findings to the rectification of social inequalities, she later claimed, are impossible as there is little that can be done about “social inequalities that are perpetuated through different ‘ways of meaning’ (see for e.g. pp. 227-228)” (Scott, 2011). None-the-less, her contribution remains important to semiotic analysis and illustrates how across societies there are different pockets of abstracted meanings or habituations of meaning that function to exclude certain groups of society from particular social processes. However, for the purpose of this study an analysis of the contradictions and their discursive actions are central to the premises held by the Cultural Historical Activity Theory; Developmental Work Research and its Change Laboratory methodology and in so being are inseparable. An analysis of the data therefore has to maintain these principles. Such an analysis was proposed by Engeström and Saanino (2012) and elaborated within this thesis.

In order to sustain my position I make use of a four step analysis which relies on a selected bank of data extracted from the Change Laboratory sessions presented at the end of chapter three of this thesis. The data accumulated during the workshop (Productive Activity) is not exposed here but it is necessary that the reader bears in mind that the Productive Activity was the site where the participants’ developing ideals were counteracted by the collective cultural historical concepts of immigrant populations.

- 1) To begin with I make use of the participants' discursive actions (Engeström & Saanino, 2012) as a way of tracking collective meaning, sense making, resisting, negotiating, resolving conflicts, contradictions and double binds. However, despite the scholars' use of individual actions, these are merged in a collective reformulation of a common object and individual sense making is not apparent.
- 2) Maintaining the rationale behind the use of the discursive actions, I therefore produce a table that provides four chosen integration concepts, their psycho-social outcomes, as discussed in chapter 1 of this thesis, and the relative levels of logic hypothesised by Gregory Bateson (1972) illustrating four possible developmental shifts open to the individual participants. This analysis affords a stepping stone to the following analysis, constructed on a variation of the work of Virkkunen et al. (2012) and links integration models to levels of categorisations of human sense making. It makes use of the former discursive actions but this time uses them to trace individual-collective sense making and development. Categorisations are necessary for human sense making (see chapter 1 of this thesis), and are here exposed as a product of political integration models.
- 3) In order to capture the transformation of this concept I revert once more to a statistical analysis of the participants' ways of referring to immigrant mothers and their children and in so doing go backwards and forwards between an analyses of the collective object oriented development and of individual personal sense making actions (Vygotsky, 1978; Leontiev, 1987; Vasilyuk, 1988).
- 4) The three previous analyses provided me with the means to build a final model which illustrates individual-collective sense making during collective conflicts, critical conflicts, double binds and dilemmas whilst negotiating the creation of a new collective object. It therefore highlights the participants' individual-collective developmental trajectories between different integration concepts, categorisations of others and personal sense making. The previous discursive action resolutions are used as bench markers to analyse and momentarily, analytically stop the participants' developmental process.

Through the use of this model, this chapter will demonstrate the necessity to analyse subject positioning during the Change Laboratory process as not only a collective object-oriented developmental movement but as an individual-collective and subject within subject movement of development that found its new motive and need in the rearticulation of its purpose. In chapter three of this thesis, the way in which Engeström (1987) interprets the works of Vygotsky, Leontiev and Bateson were evaluated and criticised. This chapter will further this debate and finally a new reading will be proposed based on evidence drawn from the data. This discussion makes an appeal for an analysis of subject positioning in the data that ensues from a Change Laboratory process in order to be able to articulate human diversity.

This debate does not negate the importance of Engeström's (1987; 1999) work or his methodology but rather endeavours to enrich the descriptive and analytical possibilities of Change Laboratory data through re-reading its theoretical account in a quest for an analysis of social position and acknowledgement of the diversity of the participants voices due to their personal experiencing of any given social, cultural and political situation (Saanino, 2006; Vasilyuk, 1988).

As previously stated, the final analysis is derived from the quest to break away from the subject-object and individual-collective dualism that is still present within the Cultural Historical Activity Theoretical analytical approach. That is to say, that I desired to re-centre developmental theories between the two existing extremes found within socio-cultural theories (Sawyer, 2002); process ontology and inseparability. The shifts were stimulated by the interventionists' use of mirror data and conceptual models on the one hand, and on the other, by an agentic synergetic highly emotional debate between, in particular, two participants. This agentic synergetic interaction is taken as a socio-genetic semiotic secondary stimulus that is far from being neutral (Vygotsky, 1986). The dialogical dynamics that occur within a Change Laboratory process are therefore to be understood as taking place within a space in which (Gutiérrez, 2008; Gutiérrez, Rymes and Lawson, 1995) negotiations, collisions, ruptures and resistance surface between, on the one hand, the interventionist researcher and the participants, and on the other, between the participants and are consciously reworked into a new hybridised multidimensional, multi-voiced, continually evolving object.



#### 4.1 Analysis 1: Discursive forms of contradictions

Engeström (1999) maintained that Developmental Work Research resides on five principles of which the fourth states that the historically evolving inner contradictions are the chief sources of movement and change in activity systems and that they need to be overcome for development to take place as they are a source of frustration, double bind, conflicts and dilemmas between the participants of a singular activity and network of activities. The concept of contradictions and their evolution is central in the analysis of a Change Laboratory process as it captures the internal dynamics of the development of an activity system. It is related to the distinction between the immediately observable surface of an activity and the internal relationships in its systemic structure, doing away with just external manifestations of dialogue and text analysis that are abstracted from their historical-dialectical object-oriented manifestations. The analysis of contradictions goes beneath the surface, away from the obvious, linking the evolving structure to its historical socio-cultural environment.

Despite contradictions being indicators of the dialectical influence of an activity's internal relations, these cannot be observed directly but can only be identified through their verbal or discursive action (Engeström & Saanino, 2011). Davydov (1993) claimed that "there is little doubt that the theory of activity, developed by Vygotsky would have included semiotics and social interaction as a central component in a way that existing theory has as yet failed to do" (p.50). Heeding this reflection, tracking discursive actions as a means to assess participants' personal sense-making, experiencing in the reconstruction of their collective object appears founded. Moreover, identifying and understanding the ways that the participants overcome contradictions during the Change Laboratory sessions can help the researcher-interventionist to interpret and understand the dynamic forces under which the participants act in their daily work.

I suggest that it is not only the object that is of importance in this analysis but also the possibility that it affords to track the historical-dialectical object-oriented dialogue that ensues amongst the participants and how it acts as a mediating factor, a natural-agentive semiotic secondary stimulus, a driving force of development. Engeström et al. (2011) focused on the manifestations of conflict, double binds and critical conflicts and underplayed the participants' resolutions of these experiences. However, in this study it was found that manifestations of

development were tracked through the participants' resolutions of their various emotional and psychological experiences (Vasilyuk, 1988). Without the participants' shift to a perspective in which immigrant mothers and their children are perceived as mothers and children or simply people of the world (Appiah, 2006) and whose differences are contributions to the world rather than aspects that have to be changed, the conflicts and frustrations within and between the groups could not diminish. Furthermore, it appeared obvious from the ethnographic data accumulated for this study that neither would the mothers find a motive to interact within a society that conveys a social and political message of superiority and in which there is a loss of personal dignity (Appiah, 2005; Freire, 1970).

Moreover, Engeström and Sannino's (2011) analytical framework that tracks the changing dynamics of internal contradictions has been elaborated upon below to include tacit verbal cues and more elaborated socio-cultural meaning as ways of identifying the said verbal cues. Tacit knowledge in learning organisations is highly personal and hard to formalise, making it difficult to communicate to others or to share with others (Takeuchi & Nonaka, 1995) but the recognition of tacit knowledge provides multiple zones for creativity (Seidler-de Alwis & Hartman, 2008). This addition was deemed appropriate firstly as the cues depicted in table 4.1 below were relatively scarce in their given form, perhaps due to a cultural way of interacting, and secondly, as the aforementioned scholars stated, to the difficulty of pinning a manifestation down to a rudimentary linguistic cue such as a simple 'but' or 'no'. Furthermore, they state that linguistic cues are not to be taken as corresponding mechanically to specific manifestations, as cues can express many other things and as high frequencies of certain linguistic cues in a part of the dialogue may be an indicator of a "strong conflictual undercurrent which is for some reason kept implicit and under the surface" (p.375). Due to the complexity of the verbal cues and the tacit and elaborated forms of discourse, the use of a verbal tracking software devise was made impossible. I therefore undertook to do this manually. The elaboration of Engeström et al's. (2011) analytical framework is presented in table 4.1 below.

Double binds are manifested with participants expressing helplessness or manifesting a need state and finding their resolution in practical transformations that go beyond words, for example, concrete actions such as mapping out a new charter for the Home-School project. Critical conflicts engender feelings of violation or guilt and produce inner doubts that paralyse

the participants' thoughts when confronted with contradictory motives that appear to be unsolvable alone. Critical conflicts are resolved when the individual manifests a new more expansive understanding of the former situation. In this study an example of the resolution of a critical conflict is when Wendy, as a resolution to her feelings of being violated by Thomas, said in session 8: *'You know Steve I think that it would be great to invite some of the people that I know that are doing great things here to come and tell us how they went about getting around the blockers'*. Her acknowledgement of the migrant and refugee people's rights to be agentic in their own life process is a way of reclaiming her position as partly belonging to the collective of immigrants (Leontiev, 1987; Resnik et al., 2001).

Conflicts are situations where participants argue about the different perceptions of their object and criticise each others' actions. Such as in the following extract taken from the workshop:

Steven: *Here when we are speaking of school it has nothing to do with culture, and school says in the law that it gives the same opportunity to everyone and this is what we are attempting to do; to help the parents to understand how they need to accompany their children at school. The only reference that we have here is that of the law. In our environment we are not there to impose the question of religion or of culture, but school is for all genders and this needs to be respected. It is not our problem if they do not believe in this here, it is like that, it is a law and there is no question about this issue*

Facilitator Frank: *I just don't know if we can do this... I mean they*

Thomas: *Look, can we just get on with the other issues to be dealt with... they have to do what we say as that is the way it is*

Facilitator Margaret: *But we are being placed in the front line and this is not what we thought we were going to be doing*

Steven: *Look... we will find a way to deal with this but you have to be firm... otherwise they will do what they want and there will be no discipline*

Collective: *hmmm*

The resolution is expressed in finding a compromise, submitting to authority or a majority which is what happened at the end of the extract above. The facilitators felt that Steven was imposing a societal rule and although they agreed with the rule they did not feel at ease imposing it. Many of the rules for immigrants were tacit and putting them into words goes against a natural order.

A dilemma is an expression or exchange of incompatible evaluations such as found in the following extract:

Sylvia: *Well I don't know what we can do with this... if they don't see education the way that we do then we are never going to be able to do anything about the gap*

Victoria: *I don't agree, it will be a slow process but in the end they will realise that they need to be more active in their roles and that children are not passive learners, although I don't agree either that they are autonomous. We need to guide them and set limits and punish and test. Otherwise how are we to know what is going on and I mean well what is the point of, well of*

Wendy: *There are these schools... what do they call them? Rudolf Steiner or something, they have some weird way of teaching kids, some say it is very productive*

The resolution of a dilemma is expressed in a reformulation or a denial as in the extract below. Thomas denies the need to find a new way of dealing with the problems encountered within the school arena:

Thomas: *We are not going to change our way of teaching in schools. This is not under discussion; it is the parents that need to align with the way that schools teach and to do what we expect of them, otherwise the children suffer the consequences, as we well know.*

The analysis of the discursive manifestation of the Home-School Change Laboratory (9 sessions) were identified and checked two weeks apart by a careful reading of the corpus. The manifestations were placed under the relevant titles and the cues given in the Table 4.1 have

been put into parenthesis. An example of session one is provided below. The other sessions have been placed in the Appendix 7, due to space and fluidity of text.

*Table 4.1 Types of discursive manifestations of contradictions*

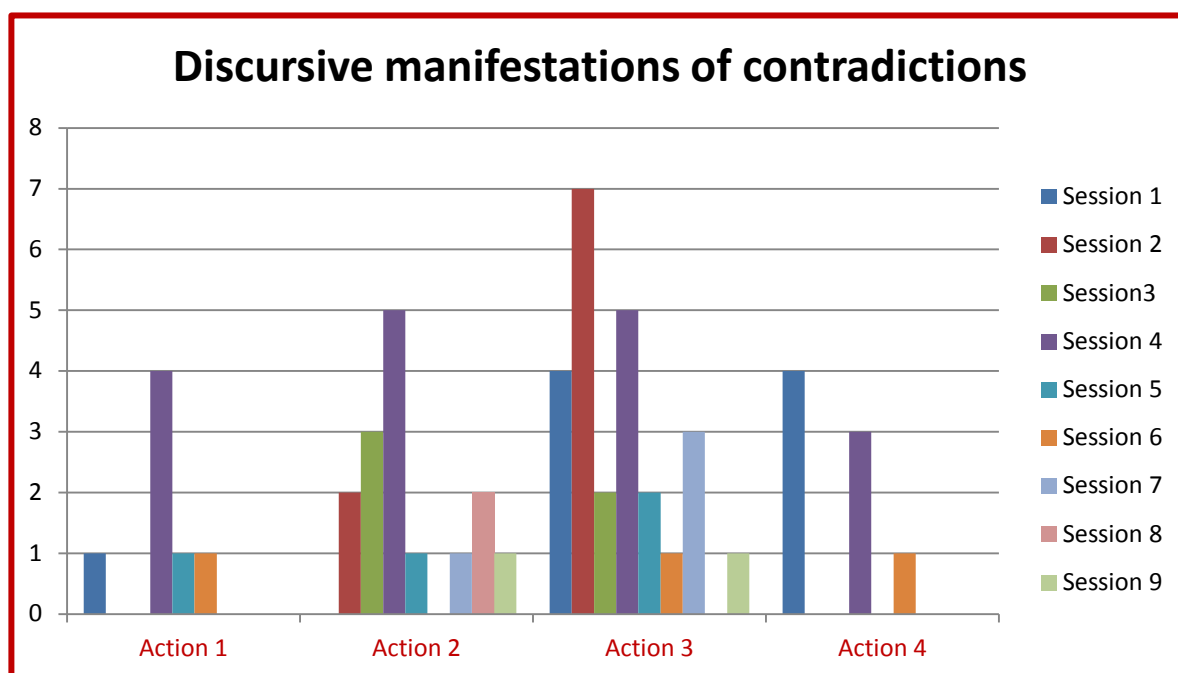
<b>Manifestations</b>	<b>Features</b>	<b>Linguistic cues</b>
<b>Double bind</b>	Facing pressing and equally unacceptable alternatives in an activity system. <i>Resolution: practical transformation (going beyond words)</i>	Pressing rhetorical questions, expressions of helplessness  “we”, “us”, “we must”, “we have to”
<b>Critical conflict</b>	Facing contradictory motives in social interaction, feeling violated or guilty  <i>Resolution: finding new personal sense and negotiating new meaning</i>	Personal, emotional, moral accounts narrative structure, vivid metaphors  “I now realise that”
<b>Conflict</b>	Arguing, criticising  <i>Resolution : finding a compromise, submitting to authority or majority</i>	“no”, “ I disagree”, “this is not true”  “yes, this I can accept”
<b>Dilemma</b>	Expression or exchange of incompatible evaluations  <i>Resolution: denial, reformulation</i>	“on the other hand... on the other hand”, “yes but”  “I did not mean that”, “I actually meant”

In table 4.2 below, and as stated above, the discursive manifestations clearly represent the words in parenthesis but are not cues that could be detected by computer software and as Change Laboratory processes produce massive amounts of data, this could be a problem, but to my mind it is one well worth the effort.

*Table 4.2 Analysis of discursive manifestations of contradictions in the Home-School Change Laboratory*

<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Manifestation</b>	<b>Features</b>	<b>Linguistic cues</b>
Turn 10	Dilemma	Reformulation	I mean didn't you say; I mean I'm doing extra studies (on the other hand)
Turn 28	Dilemma	Provoking	Then why is (but)
Turn 29	Dilemma	Confusion-denial	Oh it is just (denial)
Turn 30	Conflict resolution	Acceptance	Let's move on (yes this I can accept)
Turn 89	Double bind	refusal	Perhaps we should (we must)
Turn 90	Conflict	Rejection	We have already discussed (no I disagree)
Turn 95	Conflict	Rejection	We are not a social welfare (no I disagree)
Turn 120	Conflict	Scorn- disagree	Oh jeez really (no I disagree)
Turn 159	Dilemma	Side stepping	We don't want to overload (denial)
Turn 320	Critical conflict resolution	Negotiating new meaning	We could say build trust (I now realise that)
Turn 53 line 210-215	Conflict	Rejection	Oh come on we have (no I disagree)

After the selection and placing of the cues into tables such as the one above, the occurrences of the discursive manifestations of internal contradictions were quantified and inserted into two separate charts, the first representing the problematic manifestations and the second the resolutions (see Table 4.2 above). The rationale behind this was that the resolutions needed to be separated from the problem cues as they were manifestations of a process of development. Once this was achieved a far more dynamic interplay was perceptible. The data analysis shall therefore present these three levels. The distribution of the discursive manifestations depicted in Figure 4.1 below represents several forms of dynamics of the internal contradictions.



**Legend:** Action 1 = Double bind  
 Action 2 = Critical conflict  
 Action 3 = Conflict  
 Action 4 = Dilemma

*Figure 4.1 Discursive actions without resolutions*

*Table 4.3 Occurrences of discursive manifestations*

Discursive manifestations	Double bind	Critical conflict	Conflict	Dilemma
Percentage of occurrences	12.6	27	45	14.4

Percentages of discursive actions that occurred within the sessions are represented within the Table 4.3. The first session was dominated by dilemmas; they then decreased until the fourth session. The occurrence of dilemmas point to the participants' non-agentive actions towards their object of integrating immigrant mothers. They were adhering to the national perspective of immigrant populations. The decreasing occurrences of dilemmas illustrates that they began to shift from their initial perspective. In other words the participants' collective object had not been visible (Leontiev, 1987) and they were initially unaware that they did not have a common understanding of what they required the mothers to do, how the mothers were to do this and what the consequences could be. Furthermore, they did not know the mothers they only knew

them theoretically. Mirror data and secondary stimulus guided them and turned the more passive dilemmas into conflicts as the central developmental contradiction began to emerge. Dilemmas arose again in session 4, and this time the dilemmas were accentuated by the secondary stimulus of research that revealed different types of integration models such as pluralism and ethnist, two extremes. The pluralist model stimulated several conversations as the participants reflected on their national model of assimilation. After the fourth session dilemmas were reduced to almost nothing.

Occurrences of conflicts replaced those of dilemmas in the second session and then reduced in the third session to emerge again in the fourth and seventh session. The reasons for these shifts were as follows: in the second session the mirror of a refugee mother relating her frustration at not having agency in her financial life disturbed the participants and the group began to fragment, in particular between two participants, one of whom is a person with a refugee status. The conflictual situation mediated the participants' learning process, acting as a natural agentive secondary stimulus. Here it was very clear that the central developmental contradiction was creating strong tensions during the participants repositioning towards their object of integrating immigrant mothers. Several of the participants were focused on their motive, to improve on immigrant children's school performance, but were not quite sure how this connected to the mothers. Within the fourth session the integration model at first created dilemmas and then these gave way to conflicts as certain participants began to criticise their socio-political system. They became aware that they had simply reproduced social discourse that stipulated that an assimilation model of integration was the best way to be without questioning the consequences for the immigrant populations. A secondary stimulus presenting the vicious circle that arises between immigrants' behaviour and nationals' relative behaviour created further dissension but also led to a resolution of the conflict for certain participants as they stepped back in a process of meta-reflection of their perceptions of others. The new wave of conflicts in the seventh session was aggravated due to the insertion of a table that demonstrated parents' cognitions, from different geographic areas of the world, on how children develop knowledge. The stimulus once more led to conflicts but was resolved through a side-stepping in which the participants admitted to having problematic national parents and children. I perceived this debate as representing a developmental shift in the participants' conceptions of immigrant parents and their children as being '*not that much more problematic*



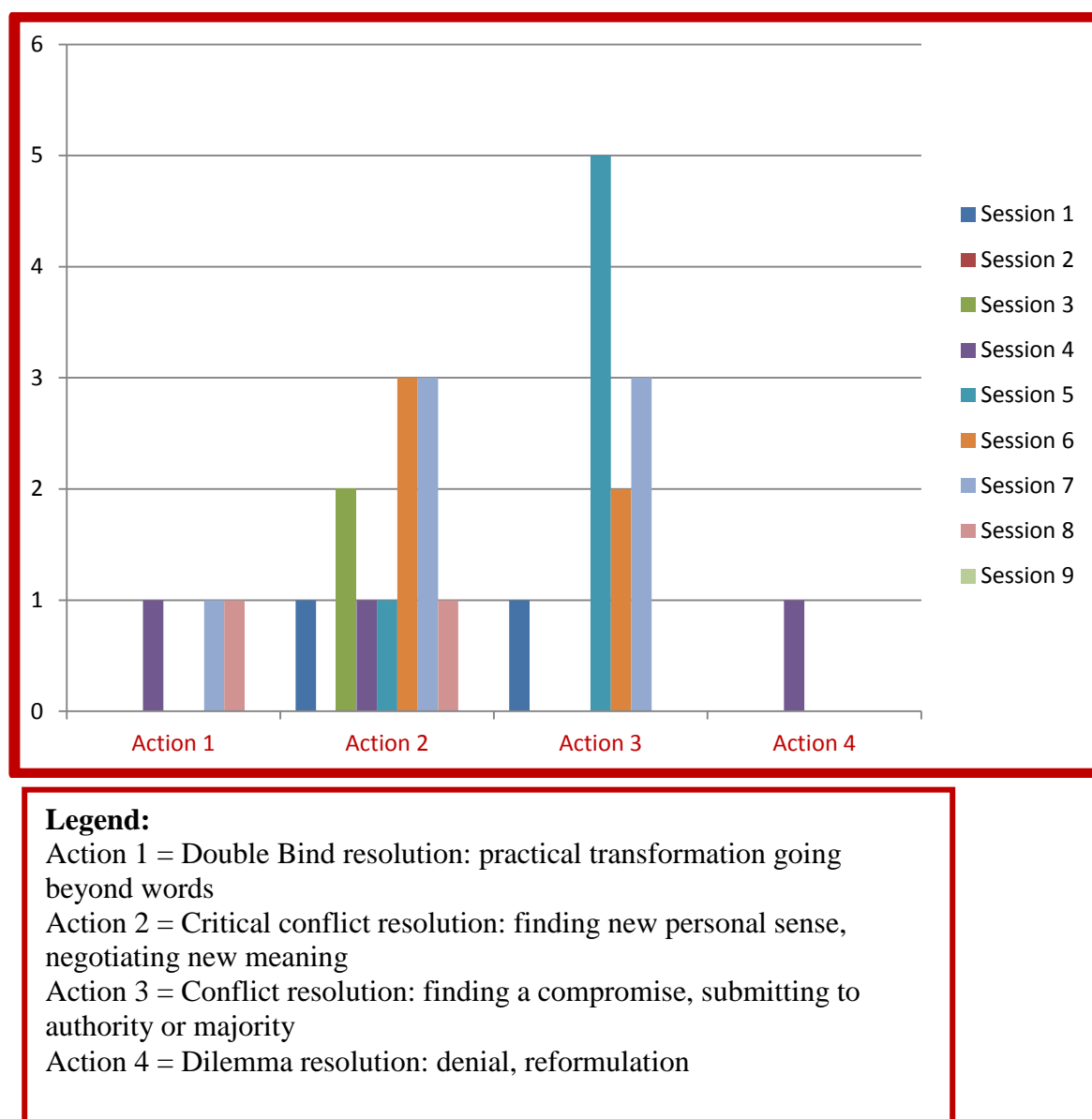
*than certain of the national parents and their children'* and in this way opening up the possibility of perceiving immigrant mothers and their children as whole human beings.

Discursive conflict resolutions were high in sessions five, six and seven (see Figure 4.2 below) due to the secondary stimuli that presented immigrant mothers and children in a more concrete perspective. Furthermore, the heated debates between two of the participants, Thomas and Wendy were propelling the other participants into reflecting upon their former ways of having perceived immigrants. The central developmental contradiction was incrementally shifting towards one that was collectively accepted and more expansive and empathetic thereby diminishing the frequency of exchange value articulations of immigrant populations. The reification and classification of immigrant mothers into categories of *weak and competent* or *passive and active* had begun to take a more articulated shift towards exploring just who the mothers really were and how they dealt with their daily preoccupations of having a safe place to raise their children.

Critical conflicts represented 27% of the cues. Although it appears in Table 4.3 that most of these occurred in session 4, they were in fact present in 2 to 3 occurrences throughout the sessions besides in session 7. The critical conflicts were mostly manifested by one participant as she repositioned herself within the socio-political environment as neither a Somali person nor a Suisse. In this form the critical conflicts articulated the secondary contradiction where the debate was on two planes; firstly as a critical conflict within herself as subject and object, and on the other between herself and another participant (fragmented subject) and the object. However, two other critical conflicts emerged in relation to secondary stimuli in the form of long speeches on the actual socio-political contexts and the possible consequences that this might incur for the nationals themselves, which represented secondary and tertiary contradictions.

The critical conflict resolutions were the highest in sessions 7 and 8. This is why it was mentioned above that session 7 was devoid of incidences of critical conflicts. Wendy resolved her dilemma and manifested agentive discursive actions, taking positions both as Somali by adhering to her family nuclear unit and at the same time articulating her adherence to the emergence of a concrete perspective towards migrant and refugee mothers and their children. The other critical conflicts that had emerged were resolved by the other participants as their

design took shape and they were able to map out a new activity, one that included the need to enter into a dialectical relation with immigrant mothers and an attempt to build trust between all stakeholders in the community.



*Figure 4.2 Discursive actions resolutions*

Double binds were manifested mostly in session four, the resolutions of which were fairly homogeneous across sessions 5, 7 and 8, pointing to the participants' agentic and practical construction of a new design in an effort to overcome their secondary contradiction.

The critical conflicts shed a light on the nature of the primary contradiction in the activity while the double binds were decisive for the formulation of the researcher's hypothesis about the secondary contradictions. Transitions from dilemmas and conflicts to critical conflicts and double binds point to the articulation and historical specification of the contradictions that the actors are facing, although the identification of systemic contradictions from discursive data still needs to be tested and revised.

Engeström and Sannino (2011) maintained that rudimentary linguistic cues may take a different shape if a particular social language (Bakhtin, 1982) dominates in an organisation, and I agree that the social voluntary nature of this intervention project had a great deal to do with the discursive actions that arose. Had this project been heavily financed by governmental organisations I believe that the actions would have been more controlled and the split less aggressive as the driving motive would have been coloured by financial gain. Secondly, a social language related to a national role of power was particularly prevalent in the beginning and remained so with one of the participants to the end.

“Everything is inherently contradictory... Contradiction is the root of all movement and vitality, it is only in so far as something has a contradiction within it that it moves, has an urge and activity” (Hegel, 1969, p.439). The variations of discursive actions, which are manifestations of contradictions, in particular the occurrence of critical conflict resolutions indicates that there were developmental shifts amongst the participants however, it is difficult, within the above collective analysis to discern how the development took place, who resolved conflicts by simply compromising and who created new tools and signs, concluding in new ways of perceiving immigrant mothers and their children. Consequently, a further analysis is necessary, as I have stated above, due to the different configurations of each individual's activities and the resolutions of their inherent contradictions. In the meshes of the complex discourses are to be found the participants different work and personal activities, their initial conditions, their temporalities, their difficulties and their instruments (Bronckart & Bulea, 2006; Bulea, 2007; Nikiforov, 2009) and due to these differences individuals within a Change Laboratory do not experience their object in the same way (Vygotsky, 1999), their Zones of Proximal Development in any one activity are not the same as another at the same time and the use of a secondary or abstract stimulus is not experienced (Vasilyuk, 1972) by any two individuals in the same way which allows for variations of individual-collective creativity.

The analysis carried out above relied on discursive actions and Leontiev (1978) purported that an individual's development takes place between the individuals' leading activity at any given one time and his or her network of activities.

Leontiev (1978) in *Activity and personality* wrote that in the investigation of individual development, "investigation of personality must not be limited to an explanation of prerequisites but must proceed from a development of activity, its concrete types and forms and those connections into which they enter with each other inasmuch as their development radically changes the significance of the prerequisites themselves. Thus the direction of investigation turns not from acquired habits, skills, and knowledge to activity characterised by them but from the content and connections of activities to which and what kind of processes realise them and make them possible" and that "(t)hese hierarchies of activity are engendered by their own development, and it is they that form the nucleus of the personality". In other words, knots that "connect separate activities are tied not by the action of biological or spiritual forces of the subject which lie within him but by that system of relationships into which the subject enters". I understood through the reading of this text that each and every individual's relationships to any one activity are realised by the aggregate of his multifaceted activities and therefore any individual is only, on the one hand, collective and at the same time never truly collective in a given activity.

By only focusing on the collective production of a new object, the analysis side steps important individual contributions and the articulation that individuals are involved in multiple activities that at certain moments contradict each other (Leontiev, 1978, chapter 5). The unit of analysis therefore is not at the singular activity level but at the individual's possibility of coordinating his or her network of activities in daily life. For example, many people in the region that this study took place are practicing Catholics. In the Christian bible there is a clause that states that people should only do to others what they would like others to do unto them and yet they ask immigrants to let go of their beliefs and ways of life and to take on those of their own society. Such a request is in contradiction to their own desire to maintain national sovereignty, as by maintaining national sovereignty one maintains a homogenous culture with its historical beliefs and values. It appears then that their religious beliefs and their political dogmas are in contradiction to each other. In order to overcome such contradictions the social need for maintaining national sovereignty needs to be turned around,

that is to say that in the case of this study, immigrants need to be seen as being useful. Social need is important as it is in the “context of social needs that activity’s inner content is revealed and realised as a result of which it acquires a general social meaning” (Kasavin, 2009). Moreover, it is the actions that take place between different individuals’ activities that generates a space for creativity.

To conclude, I turn once more (discussed briefly in chapter 3) to the proposition made by R. Engeström (2009) in her article, ‘*Who is acting in an activity system*’ (pp. 257-273). She argued for a perspective to Activity theory that conceptualises participants of that activity as being culturally diverse interacting in several different activity systems at the same time and due to their different backgrounds they “do not necessarily share the same meanings with regard to these activities, but they share the process of engagement and construction of their subjectively unique understandings of their participation based on the communicated messages across and within activities and participants’ past experiences of certain practices” (p. 262).




Her proposition relies on a weakness found within a reading of Activity theory: “(i)n analysing and describing activity, we constantly emphasise that it is carried out by a social subject, i.e. a person that belongs to a certain social structure that determines the forms, types and stereotypes of activity. An abstract view of man as a personified embodiment of society or a social group leads to an equally abstract and objectivistic description of activity which states that the conditions of activity are objective, they provide the natural social milieu in which a man acts; the conditions determine the selection of a goal: the goal in its turn determines the adequate ways and means to attain it. But where is there room for the individual here? He does not exist. It is society that acts through the individual, who, like a dummy, takes the standard steps of his prescribed dance or emerges as an impersonal external force shifting the machine of activity into gear” (Nikiforov, 2009, p. 101). Such a perspective on activity does not allow for the investigation of creativity as “if the subject of activity is no more than personified society, i.e. if he acts only in accordance with social norms and standards, then where do changes in these standards come from and how do new norms appear?” (p. 201). It should rather be understood that the individual agentively sets his or her goals, “elaborates a plan of action, or chooses his means, although he relies on socially accepted norms and standards, he is nonetheless guided by his own understanding of the situation, his tastes and preferences. ... society cannot generate the new it is only generated by the individual who violates existing

social norms and standards, puts features of his individuality into action, often makes mistakes, fails to attain his goals, sometimes even perishes, but sometimes is successful and creates new models of activity and behaviour” (p.201). However, the study of development cannot refute collective society as being intricately part of the individual (Sagatovsky, 2009).

## 4.2 Analysis 2 Concepts of integration, psycho-social outcomes and levels of logic

In order to answer my first question I feel compelled to identify the nature of the movements individually. Moreover, the question implies that the participants are to overcome a historical socio-cultural-political perception of immigrant mothers and their children and to find another more empathetic form. This proposition requires developmental markers or levels of moving from non expansive to expansive ways of perceiving others. In order to do this I applied four of Bateson’s (1973) levels of logic to four concepts of integration and their relative psychosocial outcomes (see Table 4.4 below).

*Table 4.4 Concepts of integration, psychosocial outcomes and levels of logic*

 <p><b>Concepts of Integration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Cosmopolitanism</li> <li>•Pluralism</li> <li>•Assimilation</li> <li>•Ethnic- separation</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Psycho-social outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Interconnectivity- interdependence- welfare of all.</li> <li>•Positive interaction- maintenance of political sovereignty own culture.</li> <li>•Heightened communication breakdown- loss of self</li> <li>•Intensification of auto-exclusion</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Levels of logic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Learning level 3</b> – the concept of self becomes a concept of being part of a whole - dialectical</li> <li>• <b>Learning level 2</b> – recognition of differences of past and present – choosing strategies</li> <li>• <b>Learning level 1</b> – learning the skills of the system - adaptation</li> <li>• <b>Learning level 0</b> – automatic response</li> </ul>
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The image at the top of each table represent the ideal outcome: cosmopolitanism is represented by multiple colours woven together in one whole; the psychosocial well being of this concept

is represented by a woman taking off her mask/ veil (Du Bois, 1903/ 2012); and the level of learning is represented by navigating many routes in life.

Bateson (1973) wrote that learning level 0 requires no reflection, it is automatic and spontaneous. This level is devoid of metalearning (Johnson, 2004). Nation states or immigrants that adopt ethnic forms of integration rely on the intensification of boundaries. The process involved is either a total assimilation of the other or total exclusion and is without compromise (Hannan, 2004). This form of integration can lead to ethnic revival and hostility and is often conditioned by fear and subservience to a higher order. It does not require reflection and so is at level 0 of Bateson's levels of logic. People do not allow critical conflicts to emerge and remain at the level of dealing with dilemmas resolved through denial or reformulation.

Learning level 1 on the other hand requires a certain degree of learning, however, metalearning is still not present, only the skills of the system are understood and used. Assimilation is at this level, nation states require immigrants to abandon their former cultures and to adapt to their own without questioning. However, although certain immigrants may prefer this model it often leads to a lack of communication between national and immigrant populations and therefore a lack of reflective learning of each other's ways. Immigrants prefer to live in semi-isolation and are therefore criticised as not respecting the ways of the nationals (Van Zanten, 2012). Conflicts are typical of this type of logic and are resolved by finding a compromise, submitting to authority or the majority. In the analysis of discursive actions above, the statistics show that conflicts and their resolutions represented the most common discursive actions. This is to be expected as change of historically induced social, cultural and political ways of experiencing resist change (Pederit, 2000). It also attests to the type of political model in use.

At learning level 2 there is recognition of differences between past and present and a choice of which strategies are to be deployed. A Pluralist society requires that nationals and immigrants make choices and develop socio-political strategies. However, common national values have to be maintained. Besides the immigrants' evaluation of their present situation to that lived previously, they have difficulty discerning between the apparent good will of the nationals and the hidden curriculum (Tosey, 2005). Pluralist societies cling to national sovereignty despite

adhering to an international society of states and they are therefore not equated to a cosmopolitan society where sovereignty is downplayed in favour of an emergent world community (Ramsbotham & Woodhouse, 2011). However, the consequences of this model are more positive than that of assimilation. Immigrants and nationals share positive interaction and knowledge of the other is more heightened. The psychological experiencing of double binds is common here and is resolved by going beyond words and of practical transformation.

Learning level 3 is achieved by few (Bateson, 1973). It is a level of logic that requires transcending the here and now of finding new communal forms of being such as those found in Buddhist societies. This level of learning is the most astute, relying on dialectical and meta-reflection. Cosmopolitanism is an ideology and not an integration model. But I hypothesise that if it were, then people would truly be able to transcend the here and now and work towards an emergent world community organised (Appiah, 2006) around the notion of justice and the welfare of all. It recognises that we have an obligation to each other and that there is an interconnectivity of all creatures in the cosmos. This level was represented by critical conflicts and their resolutions; finding new personal sense and negotiating new meaning, 27% of the discursive actions were represented by critical conflicts. This is significant as change requires intense forms of negotiation and time and attests to the participants' Zones of Proximal Development, of their readiness to perceive mothers as people of the cosmos, as whole human beings instead of as human waste (Bauman, 2004).

Referring to Table 4.4 I will now analyse several of the participant's discursive actions and resolutions of these with the help of a Four Fields model (see Figure 4.3) in order to track their development from perceiving immigrant mothers and their children as being problematic and deficit to being whole human beings with differences that can make a dialectical contribution to their society and themselves.

In Figure 4.3 the four integration possibilities are on a backdrop that represents individual choice. Within a given society and despite an overarching political doctrine, individuals manifest variations of the given model. This is to say that people are not completely conditioned by their socio-cultural and political environments due to modern forms of communication, media and transport. Within a nation state that practices a model of assimilation, might certain individuals have a tendency towards an ethnist approach or others



to one of cosmopolitanism? Moreover, an individual may at work practice assimilation and at home that of pluralism. I placed cosmopolitanism and ethnist models on a continuum of exclusion as ethnist excludes one culture or another whereas cosmopolitanism embraces all but excludes boundaries. Pluralism and assimilation both include sovereignty. Pluralism and cosmopolitanism however, have higher levels of well being amongst immigrant populations than do those of assimilation and ethnist models (Berry, 2012; 1977; Bourhis et al., 1977; Newnham, 2006)

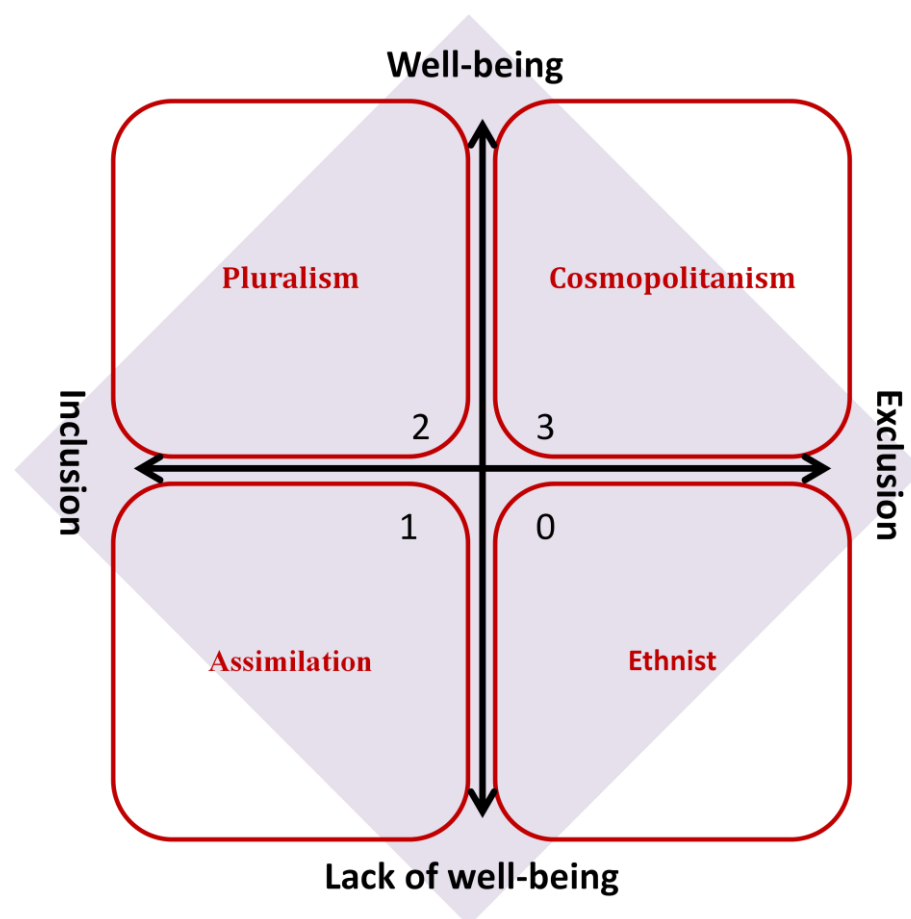


Figure 4.3 Four field, possibilities of integration

**Case study 1 Victoria:** In session one Victoria attempted to discuss the projects object ‘integrating the mothers’. This data indicates that the societies are not in contact with each other which is one of the characteristics of an ethnist society. As Victoria made no attempt at furthering her insight she remained at level 0 of learning: ‘*well I feel that they hardly ever mention the mother’s integration*’. In session 2 she reinforced her position with her comment on a projected text of a refugee mother’s revelation of what she felt about integration ‘*Oh that*

*is reality*'. This comment showed no empathy towards the mother's desire to be an autonomous human being living with dignity. Later on in the same session Victoria referred to immigrant children in a derogatory way thereby reinforcing her strong position of exclusion and separation between the immigrant populations and the nationals, *'I mean if we did not have problems with these children... I take everyone as an equal but there are just things that you cannot ignore'*. The first sign of a possible shift came in session three where Victoria, after having viewed a secondary stimulus on ways that mothers think of their children's formal education, concluded that immigrant mothers and national mothers were similar: *'actually there are a lot of Swiss that are the same; we cannot forget that there is a supposed illiteracy level that is quite high as well as for math and science'*.

Later on she questioned her professional behaviour toward immigrant mothers stating that: *'I don't know much about the mothers at all and I just have these ideas of what they live and how they react by listening to teachers' complaints and some intercultural and migrant lectures that I attended. I have never spoken to one of the mothers of the children that I work with in remedial classes. I just send the child back to the teacher and she communicates my message to the mother'*.

Although Victoria did not speak of her health she appeared far happier towards her work with immigrant children at the end of this session. Instead of dealing with the children's difficulties alone she now perceived the possibility of having a partner, the child's mother. This extract testifies to a movement from excluding immigrant mothers on the basis of them being problematic, to reflecting on them as being the same as any other mother with individual differences. Her meta-reflection placed her learning within Bateson's level 3 and moves her political category between pluralism and cosmopolitanism. This movement demonstrates that development is not a linear occurrence but that people develop in different ways and that the stimulus provided needs to be within the person's Zone of Proximal Development. It has to touch a need state to provoke inquiry. The secondary stimulus of the different ways in which mothers perceive their children's education worldwide stimulated Victoria who is a specialised teacher and a woman. After session 4 Victoria expanded on her new way of thinking. She empathised with Wendy, who is the child of refugee parents and so has a refugee status despite her having been born and raised in Switzerland, and myself as an immigrant and holder of a Swiss passport for the past 25 years:

*'I have never reflected on what we are doing when we speak of immigrant people. I suppose that you and Wendy have both suffered from the way in which we judge you on a daily basis and the way in which we try to protect what we think is so precious. What gets me is that we do not stop praying for others and how we should help the third world and those in trouble but we cannot even see what is on our own doorstep... really I feel embarrassed at my initial reactions... I am really sorry.'*

In session 7 Victoria highlights their central developmental contradiction, or primary contradiction, in her response to another participant who declared that the Swiss people did not need immigrants: *'We do otherwise we don't have anyone to make us look good'*. This is once more a meta-reflection and therefore is at level 3 however, it is not possible to state whether she is still lobbying for national sovereignty as she identified, in the use of the word *'we'*, with other Swiss nationals.

**Case study 2 Thomas:** In the preliminary discussion Thomas took a hegemonic position in the use of his words: *'They have to change, is that clear? We don't have a problem, they do. Our children behave in schools, they don't take drugs and drink and fight with knives'*. Later he stated that *'they should just go back'*. In these extracts he is referring to one incident that occurred after the arrival of refugee populations from Serbia and so it is a radical generalisation and categorisation of immigrant children. There is therefore zero learning here, and rather an acceptance of media reports and street talk. The extract designates an ethnist model of integration. In session 2 he maintains his position towards the immigrant populations after having read an extract where a mother with a refugee residential status appealed to be able to work so that her family did not have to ask the refugee centre for money, which she found a humiliating experience: He replied that *'(w)e all know this and that has nothing to do with us'*. He then strengthens his initial position in his following enunciation: *'We have to remain realistic. Integration cannot imply moving into the social circles. These people need to get to know how things are done here and how to do them so that we don't have to run after them all the time and to prevent the teachers' suffering from burnout. But more than that is unrealistic. We have our families and our ways and that they could never be part of the society'*. The dichotomy we-they is very strong in this extract. He supports a national worldview and imposes cultural hegemony. Despite developmental shifts being made by other

participants, Thomas in session 4, once more generalises immigrant parents as being inferior to Swiss nationals and maintains his use of the dichotomy we-they: *'We see a lot of the parents in the special program meetings and they are really not capable of keeping the situation together. They are usually almost illiterate and some can barely sign their name; others are incapable of doing math or explaining science to their children'*. In session 6, Thomas expresses his anger towards national parents: *'They think that they know better than the teachers, that is all. Whatever the teachers do or say, or if they punish their spoiled brats, it is always seen as wrong and the kids are out of control'*. Despite the strength of his criticism he does not make a shift towards a more empathetic view of the immigrant parents. In session 8 during an argument with Wendy, Thomas states: *'you are overstepping your place'*. Thomas here articulated that even Wendy is considered as an outsider. This is problematic as Steven believed that the act of 'getting the mothers out of their homes' would spontaneously encourage communication and reduce barriers between immigrants and nationals (see, Berry, 2012) and that it did not suffice for the Swiss to simply tolerate minority groups as toleration could not serve as a substitute for harmonious existence (Parekh, 2000). Thomas and Wendy had worked in interconnected work activities for several years and yet his hegemonic attitude remained and was declared as soon as he was placed in a stressful situation. He had not negotiated any discernible developmental movements during the Change Laboratory.

I could blame Thomas for making no attempt to change and therefore commit a *fundamental attribution error* as his resistance could possibly be due to a lack of sufficiently targeted mirror data and secondary stimuli, in other words as argued elsewhere it is possible that I did not target his Zone of Proximal Development as an interventionist. Lewin (1952) defined resistance metaphorically as a restraining force moving in the direction of status quo. Thomas was concerned with his public image, in session 3 he stated that *'we cannot afford to get bad reviews'*. It could be that Thomas was maintaining the status quo and his role of power, obvious in his words to Wendy, *'you are overstepping your role'*. However, Watson (1982) suggests understanding resistance as reluctance to change. Moreover, if I adhere to expansive ways of perceiving others I myself as a researcher need to accept human differences and desires. Piderit (2000) proposes "a new conception of responses to proposed organisational changes as multidimensional attitudes. This new conception is intended to encourage an appreciation for the prevalence of ambivalence in individuals' responses to change" (p.792). Thomas, in non threatening situations, had positive observable attitudes towards immigrants. I

myself had been involved with him in other activities that concerned immigrant children's wellbeing. However, in spontaneous speech he manifested ambivalent or conflicting desires and needs throughout the Change Laboratory process.

**Case study 3 Steven:** Steven held a position as a specialised teacher working in particular with immigrant children. He then went on to become head of a project that deals with immigrants and home-school relations. Steven was the most eager of all the participants for the intervention to take place in the preliminary discussion. In session 2 he insisted on encouraging the mothers to participate in activities in the wider society: *'We need to emphasise getting the mother out of the home; it is the only way, they are not socialising with the wider society'*. Steven's concern for the immigrant mothers in the extract above indicates that he has reflected on the mothers' present situation and a way that could help them to become part of the society. However, Steven is also using a generalisation as the ethnographic research carried out prior to the intervention showed that most immigrant mothers do go out of their homes and collect their children at school, run errands, go to the doctor and dentist. What they do not do is participate in more intimate activities with the national groups. Therefore, Steven's reflection is at level 1 of logic in that he is using theoretical claims on immigrant women's behaviour without verification. His perspective is one of assimilation as he still would like the mothers to behave as the national mothers do. His position was confirmed later in the same session where he stated: *'yes it has to be understood that when the child learns how to behave at home he will behave better at school and to his mother, and then the wife will be stronger in confronting her husband'*. In this extract he is referring to a woman of Asiatic origin and the Asiatic women involved in the Home-School project adopted a very passive role with their husbands. Although later he maintains that the facilitators are not to interfere with the immigrants' cultural perspectives, here he is doing just that. This interference in the ways of others is a characteristic of an Assimilation model on integration (Berry, 1997, 2012) where the socio-cultural national ways of doing things is considered the only way. Later in the same session he empathised with the immigrant populations but still upheld the dichotomy of *we and they*. It was only in session 5 that a secondary stimulus that concerned the children impacted on his thus far unaffected until now, process of thinking. He then begins to question the activities object referring to the socio-cultural historical construction of ways of perceiving immigrants and acknowledges that they have a contradiction within their system (Engeström, 1999): *'Oh yes! Well (silence) hmmm (silence)*

*then we need to think about our main contradiction and why we cannot go forward with this integration (silence) perhaps something like needing foreigners and not wanting to need them or something like that... How are we going to change something that has been here for generations? I remember my father going to work up at the reservoir while my mother had to care for us alone and take care of the vegetable garden. We had little money and ate soup most days. It was a struggle, and many people remember this and it makes them angry. I know that these feelings are unjust but then I work with these children every day and I know who they are and that they did not ask for their lives to turn into hell'. Engeström et al. (2010) argued that it is of paramount importance that the participants of a Change Laboratory recognise the source and repercussions of their primary contradiction in order to develop new ways of doing things. Here Steven is shifting to a perspective where the concept of who they are as nationals becomes intermingled with his preoccupation with the well being of immigrant children. He is using the beginning of a level 3 of Bateson's (1973) logic and moves to a Pluralist approach of integration as he is still referring the children as *they* and *them*. The shift is strengthened in session 4 where he argues that middle class national parents are also problematic in some schools. Furthermore, he shows real concern and knowledge of the system, which is an important step to change (Freire, 2004) as shown when he said '*they can't say anything about their feelings or about the system as they are afraid of being sent back...it is really a fact that criticisms of the system are not taken well...it is a delicate situation*' (Session 4).*

Steven's critical moment of experiencing is highlighted in the strong use of a metaphor in session 5 to illustrate the immensity of the problem at hand, '*we are obviously up against moving the (mountain name withheld) with a wheelbarrow*'. Lakeoff and Johnson (1980), in their seminal work '*Metaphors that we live by*', show that metaphors are not only a rhetorical device but are illustrative of a set of thinking patterns, some of which are universal and some of which are culturally specific. Steven's use is culturally specific as he lives in a region dominated by the vision of the mountain. It is also immensely personal as mountain guides living in the region where the mountain is, climb the mountain every day and would not use it as a metaphor to illustrate the impossible. Furthermore, Lakeoff and Johnson (1980) claim that the use of metaphors can shape and direct our thinking processes. New metaphors can lead to new ways of thinking. Equipped with this knowledge, an analysis of Steven's use of '*moving the (mountain) on a wheelbarrow*' could be taken as an appeal for the recognition by others,

including me, of his developmental crisis. He was now aware that simply encouraging the mothers to circulate within the society was not going to resolve the problem. Thibodeau and Boroditsky (2011) proposed that the use of metaphors illustrates how people attempt to solve social problems. They wrote that, “(w)e find that exposure to even a single metaphor can induce substantial differences in opinion about how to solve social problems: differences that are larger, for example than pre-existing differences in opinion between Democrats and Republicans” (p.1). Here the conflict was within Steven’s own experiencing of the concepts of assimilation and pluralism or cosmopolitanism.

The only other participant that made use of a metaphor was Wendy when she had reached an experiential critical crisis (Vasilyuk, 1988) in her sense making process of *who* she was, *‘I was trying to climb out of my skin’* I take these metaphors as strong semiotic signs of the participants’ personal critical conflicts that became turning points in the sense making and development of new ways of thinking in order to “reduce psychic pressure” (Axel, 1997, p.138). Critical conflicts can be durable emotional blockers, of recurrent frustration that restrict and channel the actions of human beings for years. Wendy, in her metaphor, conveyed the message that she had for years suffered from not being able to belong as she had needed to change her perception of herself in order to be part of the wider society. In Du Bois (1901) terms she had covered herself with a veil. However, she had done it so convincingly that prior to the Change Laboratory she believed that it was a possible way to be.

Case study 4 Wendy: This case was of particular interest as Wendy was already working with the social institution that aids immigrant populations legally and socially in Switzerland. She had acquired a diploma in tertiary education in health but could not find employment and was constantly told that the position had already been fulfilled. However, despite her awareness of discriminatory behaviour on behalf of Swiss nationals she desired to be part of the system. She adopted an integration strategy (Berry, 2012) of assimilation and renounced her family and origin which, states Resnik et al. (2001) is detrimental to self worth. However, as early as session 1, Wendy begins to empathise with the immigrant families: *‘obviously some of these families are in great distress’*. Her statement derives from her own personal situation and so the level of logic is not the same as if she had to go beyond self. It was furthermore an indicator of her Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1987) in this matter. It is still at level 1 where she is simply translating the system but is at least a shift from her former

position where she criticised immigrant populations for not trying to integrate. Wendy, in session two verbalises their central developmental contradiction: *'In fact the truth is that you just want the people to learn to behave and then to remain out of sight'*. Wendy, here, is moving to level two of logic where she recognises herself as being an immigrant and therefore being different to a Swiss national that has resided in the area for several generations. Her increasing awareness created tensions and conflicts with Thomas and accelerated her sense making of the contradiction that they were all housing until the end of session 4. She proclaimed that she had *'been playing a game since I was little...the tough white girl as though I could climb out of my skin'*. In session six she added that *'my parents suffer from the system, but I have had times when I was very angry with them as they just or at least I thought that they didn't make any attempt to change their position. But after this CL I realise that it is not as it all appears, or well (silence) I did sort of know this in my head somewhere but it was easier to go with the rest. I mean, it didn't look good to support our parents against the system as it could have brought trouble. I mean, no one said this but we are all aware of this somehow'*. A characteristic of level 3 of learning, 'meta-reflection' is dominant in this extract as she corrects herself, her former ways of thinking about immigrants and her parents in several places: *'as they just or at least I thought that they didn't'*, *'I did sort of know this in my head'* and *'no one said this but we are all aware of this somehow'*. Wendy pronounces that much of what immigrants live is based on tacit knowledge (Ikujiro, Nonaka and Hirotaka Takeuchi, 1995), knowledge that is not explicit but nevertheless has strong conductive social energy often conducting behaviour through fear of social sanctions such as exclusion or being expelled. Moreover, she uses 'we' acknowledging her affiliation to immigrant populations once more. It is through her recognition of this tacit knowledge that she is able to free herself from its bonds and in a creative endeavour found new meaning of self (Seidler-de Alwis & Hartman, 2008). Wendy's inner struggle attests to the consequences of political integration models, one as insidious as assimilation.

Wendy continually strengthened her position, in the remaining three sessions through solving her conundrum with the aid of decontextualised psychological tools (Vygotsky, 1978) and freed herself from the tyranny of the immediate situation, opening new possibilities unbeknown to her previously and "enabling proactive agency" and especially "counter-current action in society" (Virkkunen & Schaupp, 2011. p.631). She moved away from her former need to belong to the concept of being a Swiss national and the rejection of carrying her social



categorisation of being a refugee which was causing psychological tension (Resnik et al. 2001; Phinney et al. 2001) and chose to go beyond both possibilities, to stand outside of both categorisations. She chose to accept her difference and to be a mixture of both, she reconceptualised herself as being able to live beyond the concept of national boundaries and although she will be confronted with the *regard de l'autre* she has freed herself from its power, from its label as being a kind of person (Hacking, 1995; Appiah, 2005; Bakhurst, 2011). Hacking (1995) purported that human acts and kinds of beings come into being through our categorisations of them (see as well Bakhurst, 2011). In other words we identify with the categorisation making it come alive in its social use, “once labels are applied to people, ideas about people who fit the label come to have social and psychological effects” (Appiah, 2005, p.66). By going beyond the label, Wendy freed herself of its tyranny.

### **4.3 Analysis 3: From abstract to concrete thinking of immigrant mothers and their children**

Political dogmas produce categorisations of immigrant populations (see chapter 1 and above) and while the above analysis identified the participants’ political shifts, this analysis will trace the consequences of political dogmas and the shift of verbal categorisations in order to add content to the former analysis. This analysis returns to a collective form of analysis. In order to analyse the ways of thinking of the different participants in the Learning Activity, I elaborated upon a coding scheme developed by Virkkunen et al. (2012) applying Tolman’s (1981) distinction between metaphysics of properties, metaphysics of relationships and dialectical thinking (see table 4.5 below)

To these were added Olson’s distinction between an outsider’s point of view where the viewer applies automatic forms of categorisations to make sense of what is going on and a view based on an expansive empathetic way of identifying reality, in other words, the use of concrete forms of reasoning. The numbers 0 to 3 indicate Batesons’ levels of learning and development (Bateson, 2000; Tosey, 2006) discussed in Table 4.4 above. The results of the coding of levels of learning in the Change Laboratory sessions are placed in Table 4.5 above.

*Table 4.5 Distribution of the different forms of thinking manifested in the turns of talk referring to immigrant mothers and their children*

Code	Frequency	Percentage
0 Focus on mothers and their children's properties	40	33.4
1 Focus on relationships between factors	28	23.4
2 Focus on the overall external situation of the immigrant mothers and their children	30	25
3 Focus on immigrant mothers and their children's experience and intentions	22	18.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

Benchmarking discursive actions provides a means to quantify elements of a problem in order to observe its evolution over a span of time (Bouckaert, 1993). The first discursive benchmark '0' is defined by those moments where the participants refer to mother and children abstractly devoid of empathy using terms such as *they* or *them*. The second benchmark '1' defines those moments where the immigrant mothers and children are compared to national mothers and children and their differences are expressed as being problematic. The third benchmark '2' defines when the participants recognise that the immigrant mothers and children have traversed difficult moments and are still suffering but they are still categorised as being immigrants. The last element is where they perceive the mothers and children as being able to contribute as any other person to the well being of a society.

In Table 4.5 generally, the statistical distribution demonstrates that the participant's Zone of Proximal Development was conditioned more by concepts of ethnist-assimilation, forms of integration and an initial strong dominance of abstract thinking which was discernible in the participants' verbalisations of categorisations of immigrant mothers and their children. Furthermore, if we compare the results of the discursive actions above to the results presented here, the occurrences of critical conflicts have a similar rating to those of participants focusing on immigrant mothers and their children's experience and intentions. It would then appear that

this type of thinking comes about after a person has undergone high personal interrogation and levels of emotions. The person's psychological conflict drives the need to change (Hegel, 1969). The rating also confirms Bateson's (1973) argument that level 3 of logic is reached by few and that the transition to more expansive forms of thinking need intense remediation (Bolter & Grusin, 1999). Although some participants, mainly Thomas, never entirely shifted from this position, all the other participants manifested a variety of degrees of moving towards more concrete forms of thinking to include the mothers' and children's wider socio-political context and perceiving them as mothers and children that had different experiences but did not make them lesser human beings. They questioned this context and their own national mothers' and children's behaviour towards teachers and learning.

I shall now turn to analyse the instances in the discourses, where the dominant way of thinking became questioned, applying the benchmarks in tables 4.4 and 4.5 above. Some of the moments will be taken from the workshop, the Productive Activity. The political categories above of ethnist, assimilation, plural and cosmopolitanism have been related to Bateson's levels of logic from 0 to 3. The same levels have been applied to the levels of categorisations and in this way, when referring to levels of categorisations and logic, I at the same time make a connection to the political dogmas that are implicitly being reiterated in the participants' discourse demonstrated in the second analysis of this chapter.

Please refer to the detailed description of the Change Laboratory process in chapter 3 of this thesis for primary and secondary stimuli or other origins that led to discussion that are captured within the extracts below. Key linguistic actions shall be highlighted so that you, the reader, can easily find them as your reading progresses.

During the preliminary session the participants' discussion of the immigrant mothers and children were non empathetic, using terms that conveyed a tendency to an assimilation perspective in which it is the immigrants that have to align to the mainstream society. Stereotypes of foreigners behaving inappropriately were evoked in an attempt to maintain boundaries of *us and other*. The form that the discursive actions take is argumentative.

Thomas: *Ok but I am not doing anything extra...I will see at the end if it is of any use but don't ask me to change the way that I do things, I know what I am doing. **They have to***

*change, is that clear? We don't have a problem, they do. Our children behave in schools, they don't take drugs and drink and fight with knives*

Steven and Victoria: *That is not true of all of them*

In the first session Victoria states that she would like the facilitators to be more aware of what the mothers and children live daily. This was not a radical shift on her behalf. It appeared rather to be more a curiosity of what was going on in the mothers' lives and the role that she was attempting to define for the facilitators, however, I hoped that her initiative would expand later. The proposition was counteracted by Thomas who voiced his perception of what becoming integrated required. I have already illustrated in the excerpt above that Thomas perceived the only form of integration as being that of assimilation, but his verbal actions rather placed him as being ethnist. The other members were still caught in a dilemma as to what they were really supposed to be doing and so the conversation did not expand at this moment and this discussion represented the benchmark 0: **'focus on mothers and their children's properties'**.

*Victoria: Ok, well I really feel that they hardly ever mention the mother's integration, how she is navigating herself in her world and those kinds of things*

Thomas: *Hey we are doing homework, we are not a (swears) social welfare society*

Victoria: *Oh jeez really sometimes... they still are meant to be integrating the mother*

Thomas: *Only through getting her to understand the home-school relation and how to find a French language lesson and other activities that are offered by (the immigration organisation) and the other language groups*

Later on in the same session Wendy made a comment that introduced a measure of empathy. As I said in chapter 3 she must have drawn from her personal experience to make this statement as she did not have any contact with the mothers working within the dyads. The discursive action here is one of a dilemma as no one picked up on the cue. I gave this a benchmark 1 **'focus on relationships between factors'** as she is focusing on the facilitators in the conversation and not personally entering into a relationship with the mothers.

Wendy: *I think as well that we have a problem with the facilitators, they work very individually, they don't share much with the others and do not function as a unit where*

*experiences and resources can be shared. Obviously some of these families are in great distress and the facilitators need some sort of support but they don't call each other at all or at least I have never heard them mention this type of strategy... have any of you?*

Others: *No no uh no*

Victoria: *Ok so lack of collective work, what else?*

**Session 2** was not dramatic in the beginning although the discursive actions indicated a dilemma as the resolutions were mostly denial, for example Victoria and Thomas, and were not expansive and for this reason I applied the benchmark '**focus on mothers and their children's properties**' except for Steven to whom I gave the benchmark 1 as he attempted to focus the action on the relation of the immigrant population to the mainstream society and expressed a concern to find a compromise to the conflict that he felt. Thomas's articulation of the immigrants' position was one of exclusion which was painful for Wendy to hear. Furthermore, the articulation contained the contradiction of assimilation but exclusion.

Victoria: ***Oh that is the reality.*** (Here Victoria is referring to the mirror of the mother with a refugee residential status, Amalia)

Thomas: *We all know this and that has **nothing to do with us***

Wendy: *How can you say that?*

Steven: ***We need to emphasise getting the mother out of the home; it is the only way... they are not socialising with the wider population***

Thomas: *We have to remain realistic. **Integration cannot imply moving into the (country's) social circles. These people need to get to know how things are done here and how to do them** so that we don't have to run after them all the time and to prevent the teachers suffering from burnout. But more than that is unrealistic. **We have our families and our ways that they could never be part of***

The last comment made by Thomas had serious consequences for Wendy who felt directly attacked and so I placed her discursive actions under a critical conflict: she articulated that she thought that she was part of the mainstream societies but at that moment she felt her position was precarious. Victoria attempted to appease Wendy but at the same time she reverted to using indicators for the migrant children '*these children*' thereby excluding them and attempted to justify her actions by denial '*I take everyone as an equal*' but at the same time

reinforced her sense making of immigrant children by stating ‘*there are some things that you just can’t ignore*’. She then attempted to differentiate between good and bad immigrants as another form of justification. I therefore made use of the first and second benchmark as here Victoria was comparing qualities of immigrants. An important turn within this extract is that Wendy actually verbalised the taboo, ‘*in fact the truth really is that you just want the people to learn to behave and then to remain out of sight*’. She brought to the surface one of the branches of the central developmental contradiction and voiced the participants’ double bind. In this moment her analysis can be benchmarked by the second level as she recognised but does not distance herself from her former position. She was articulating the way that the immigrant populations live within the area, that is to say, excluded from the psycho-social national context. Thomas’s remark at the end of this excerpt confirmed his assimilationist-ethnist attitude towards immigrant populations and contained the message that Wendy was once behaving and now no longer was. Moreover, the message made Wendy wince as I imagine that he articulated her personal double bind at not being able to make the correct choice between home and society. I emphasise the personal double bind as Wendy has a double bind due to her own historical experiences.

Wendy: *That is so nice I am actually so glad **Thomas that you finally informed me that I am not one of you and will never be.** Actually if you are the example of what being you is then I would rather be me (silence) whatever that might mean*

Victoria: *I don’t think that you should take it at face value, Wendy, he was just speaking theoretically... I mean **if we did not have problems with these children** then we would not have started this project in the first place so he is not far off the point. I mean I don’t want to appear differential or anything, you know me, **I take everyone as an equal, but there are things that you just can’t ignore***

Thomas: *That that I (stuttering)*

Wendy: *Oh and what are those things that you can’t ignore?*

Victoria: *We are not referring to you we are referring to **those that just can’t bridge the educational and social gap***

Wendy: *I was probably considered under that light as well and so I don’t think that your reflections are very diversity-orientated and you are all hypocritical. **In fact the truth really is that you just want the people to learn to behave and then to remain out of sight.***

Thomas: *You seemed to agree about this until now, seems you have a change of face...*  
*(Excerpt taken from the empirical data)*

During the second workshop the following discussion was held. Here Steven confirmed his historical socio-historical perceptions despite his ongoing interaction with immigrant children and parents in his daily life. He took a mental shortcut between how children behave at school and the values being transmitted in the family. Furthermore, he crossed cultural boundaries arguing for a unique model for all. I used the first bench mark for this excerpt as both Frank and Steven are comparing the refugee families' conduct to that of the mainstream society, they were making a value judgment. Furthermore, there was total agreement and they were voicing a dilemma:

Steven: *Yes it has to be understood that **when the child learns how to behave at home he will behave better at school and to his mother, and then the wife will be stronger in confronting her husband***

Facilitator Frank: *Yes we see that when the father is the authority at the home the son hits his sister and so it goes on*

Steven: *Here when we are speaking of school it has nothing to do with culture, and school says in the law that it gives the same opportunity to everyone and this is **what we are attempting to do to; help the parents to understand how they need to accompany their children at school.** The only reference that we have here is that of the law. In our environment we are not there to impose the question of religion or of culture, but school is for all genders and this needs to be respected*

Within the third Change Laboratory session I took a more active part imposing my ideas on the situation presented. However, my stimulus could have been rejected. My positioning led to Victoria and Lilia's reflection on what it meant to be a mother, any mother in such a situation. I used the benchmarker 3 here as they were perceiving the mothers as mothers and not immigrants with a deficit. The verbal actions were benchmarked as being critical conflicts as Victoria and Lilia's way of resolving the critical conflict was through '***finding new personal sense and negotiating new meaning***'

Intervention-researcher: *Yes but this does not mean that we cannot attempt to help the parents in some way, after all a mother and a child are not independent of each other's behaviour and well-being*

Steven: ***Honestly they are not my concern and this whole thing is too complicated***

Victoria: *She is right we cannot **dissociate the mothers' well-being from that of the child***

Lilia: ***I certainly don't feel well when my children are unhappy***

Within the same session Victoria, in defence of the stereotyped perceptions of immigrant parents, acknowledged that even mainstream parents were not totally literate. Here there was a movement towards expansive or concrete forms of thinking and thus an acknowledgment of the others' values. A third and fourth benchmark from abstract to concrete forms of thinking were used. However, Steven makes use of the words '*I don't think so*' thereby staying on safe ground. I benchmarked this part of the discussion 1 and the discursive action is critical as Steven is obeying social authority at that moment.

Thomas: *We see a lot of the parents in the special program meetings and **they are really not capable of keeping the situation together**. They are usually almost illiterate and some can barely sign their name; others are incapable of doing math or explaining science to their children*

Victoria: ***Actually there are a lot of Swiss that are the same***; we cannot forget that there is a supposed illiteracy level that is quite high as well as for math and science

IR: *So when you meet the parents it is those that actually come to the school, so they have the time and inclination and those that have extremely problematic children, what about all the others? **Steven are all those that come to find out about their children illiterate?***

Steven: ***No, I don't think so; they appear to be socially well-rounded***

Still, within session 3 and after a mirror of the facilitators' comments on their doing homework another shift was perceptible. Victoria came to the conclusion that she never spoke to the mothers about their children's progress in extra curriculum. This moment was important as, although at this stage it was a dormant germ cell, it later took shape as Victoria discussed her thoughts with other colleagues outside the Change Laboratory and they decided to change and design a new way of working with the children by including their mothers in the process. The new germ cell not only included immigrant mothers but national mothers or fathers as



well. The benchmark used was taking place at Bateson's third level of learning, *learning of the contexts of the contexts* and Tolman's *dialectical thinking*, as Victoria conveyed the message of believing that mothers were important partners in their children's wellbeing and school learning. The discursive action above is a resolution to a critical conflict, finding '**new personal sense and negotiating new meaning**'.

Victoria: *I thought about the discussion in the last session and jotted down some notes in my diary. The mirror data that we saw last time is actually rather troubling as I realise that I **don't know very much about the mothers at all** and I just have these ideas of what they live and how they react by listening to teachers' complaints and some intercultural and migrant lectures that I have attended. I have never spoken to one of the mothers of the children that I work with in remedial classes. **I just send the child back to the teacher and she communicates my message to the mother.***

Sylvia: *We need to change this. I get many mothers here in the language lessons and the sewing classes **and they are mothers as are any other mothers and we need to consider this.***

Development was restrained at this moment due to a new discussion that opened up on the practicalities of encouraging the mothers to socialise within the mainstream society. The discussion arose due to the emerging object and at this stage it was a tertiary contradiction between their old way of working and the emerging new activity. It then took the form of a quaternary contradiction on the ideal plain as the participants imagined the reactions of the wider mainstream society to their project. Wendy demonstrated her personal double bind by side stepping from her former position and once more siding with the mainstream society in the personal pronoun use 'we', however, she was attempting to demonstrate knowledge of their position within the mainstream society so I benchmarked her articulation as being 2 '**focusing on the overall external situation of the immigrant mothers and their children**'. Although I said that her repositioning illustrates a double bind, her articulation was one of a dilemma and a resolution in denial of her position as a child of parents in possession of a refugee status.

Wendy: *We have to be careful about how we say these things: if we say that we are focusing on the opening of the family it means that they are completely closed and have no desire to open up (laughter)... **we are stigmatising the family that is already stigmatised as poor***

*migrants and... I see it this way, as all we see is that the migrants do not want to integrate into the host society... But isolation is a really strong term*

Thomas: *Yes, but we have to be careful as the newspapers are quick to pick up these words and turn them into what they desire*

Victoria: *Actually, it depends on whether they are optimistic or pessimistic*

Thomas: ***We cannot afford to get bad reviews***

Georgette: *That we can't... we have to get funding and the organisation has had a bad year*

Regina: *I will deal with that tomorrow first thing*

Intervention-Researcher: ***So you are in a sort of a double bind***, on the one hand you would like to help the mothers to become integrated into the wider society but on the other hand the society does not really want this, so you cannot be open about what you are doing. Did I understand this correctly?

Steven: ***Yes that is sort of what it is***. We have to say that this is for the population at large as the problem is that there is a preventive and active political stance in Switzerland at the moment, but it is taking time to find the correct path

Steven verbalised the activity's developmental contradiction in his action of blaming the immigrants for not making an attempt to know how to *behave*. He empathised with them (us) at the same time but only as an outsider and observer. I benchmarked his actions at level 1 due to the comparisons of groups in terms of *them and us*. Wendy then expanded on this abstraction of the immigrants' situation by giving a voice to the immigrant group, being one herself, and so revealing inside knowledge of what it is like to be there. The benchmark here is once again at level 3, **'focus on immigrant mothers and their children's experience and intentions'** but then she returns to her use of *'we'* siding with the mainstream group. I understood here that she was caught in her double bind of belonging and meanwhile recognising that she was categorised as a refugee person politically and socially, she believed herself to be Swiss and not the same as other refugee people to whom she was referring. Moreover once more her comments could be based on real life experiences of different refugee people within her home circle as she attests to having a deeper insight into their daily existence.

Steven: *The way that it has been structured now makes people afraid, all those questions... they memorise the answers and give out the same stuff all the time... they can't say anything*

*about their feelings or about the system as they are afraid of being sent back... it is really a fact that criticisms of the system are not taken well... it is a very delicate situation... if we state that we are making the terrain fertile for integration and that they don't take the step then they are going to be heavily discriminated... that is why they have to be agentive in their process of integration, but they are up against a system that does little to facilitate their progress, as we saw in the clip... they are always up against a double bind*

Wendy: *I want to tell you that after having been a refugee for 10 years it is really difficult to take a step forward. If we don't help them a bit then nothing will be done. If we actually implicate ourselves a bit then they feel that there is an opening and so they will move forward*

Frank: *Sorry...I mean sorry that you lived that*

There is a strong moment of collective bonding which is also important when the subject attempts to design a new activity system. Furthermore this discussion highlighted the participants' double bind. They were motivated to integrate the mothers in a more holistic manner but feared the socio-political repercussions. Most of the participants are government employees. They designed a new activity which included having more empathetic relations with the migrant and refugee mothers and a need to create trust and collaboration between the participants.

**Session 4** was interesting as there were several movements of repositioning but most of this took place after the session. Wendy picked up on Victoria's external positioning towards immigrants; she then forced Victoria to perceive the struggle that the immigrant population has to deal with and their daily experiencing. Her contribution to a shift towards more expansive forms of thinking is important as it is not at an ideal level but that of real life. I realised that Wendy was not totally aware of her positioning with the mainstream society as she stated that *'these migrants that have become more Swiss than the Swiss'*. Moreover she referred to migrants and not to refugees which split the overall categorisation of immigrants commonly used amongst Swiss nationals. To Wendy there are migrants, refugees and mainstream groups. The benchmark of her discussion is at level 3 of concrete thinking and her discursive action is the resolution to a critical conflict.

Wendy: *Oh no! I don't know how you can say that. People don't show their unhappiness, but that is more to do with fear of sanctions as Steven said before than what you claim. We just*

*have to think back on the last workshop and the way that the Vietnamese live. They are in enclaves that is a sure fact and semi-permeable as they work in those restaurants but they are run by their own people so if it were not for school they would not have anything to do with us. Then what about the mirror, that poor woman sounds desperate and lost, I think that we are more at the lowest level as we do have these migrants that have become more Swiss than the Swiss and the others that just have absolutely nothing to do in this country besides eat and breath the air*

The discussion that followed took place after the session and it demonstrates a strong resolution to a former critical conflict which played out while Victoria and Wendy were struggling with a new way of making sense of their object. Wendy accepts part of the blame for patterns of exclusion where she decided to abide with the mainstream group instead of finding a way to acknowledge both. However ‘*trying to climb out of my skin*’ attests to the shame or lack of self worth that she felt in the area as a perceived immigrant and non national despite her having been born and raised in the area. The conversation below takes place at level three of abstract to concrete ways of thinking and is once more the resolution of a critical conflict which was taking place between thought and practice.

Victoria: *I have never reflected on what we are doing when we speak of immigrant people. I suppose that you and Wendy have both suffered from the way in which we judge you on a daily basis and the way in which we try to protect what we think is so precious. What really gets to me is that in church we do not stop praying for others and how we should help the third world and those in trouble but we cannot even see what is on our own doorstep... really I feel embarrassed at my initial reactions... I am really sorry*

Wendy: *it's ok Victoria we are all blind to things around us look at me I don't know where I am I have been playing a game since I was little... the tough white girl as though I could climb out of my skin (laughter and tears)*

Intervention-Researcher: *Hey we are all learning every day and this is what is really important there have been many times in my life that I would like to have climbed out of my skin or run away from myself but that we cannot do*

The researcher interventionist position is one of collaboration within a Change Laboratory and despite maintaining a professional distance, I found myself questioning my own premises and

through Wendy's preoccupations with being a national or an immigrant I strengthened my own perception of being neither one or the other, my perception that imposed national or religious boundaries are only detrimental to human wellbeing (Appiah, 2006) and that culture should remain a personal choice and not a tool for categorising human beings (Appiah, 2005).

**In Session 5** Steven experienced a strong critical conflict due to a tertiary contradiction. The society and its wrath were looming in his mind but at the same time he could not ignore the children's reality. I benchmarked his discursive actions as 3 as he empathised with the children.

Steven: *Oh yes! Well (silence) hmm (silence) then we need to think about our central contradiction and why we cannot go forward with this integration (silence) perhaps something like needing foreigners and not wanting to need them or something like that*

Victoria: *that is where we have a problem: most stories you hear are that they are needed to clean the toilets but we don't want to talk about this*

Intervention-Researcher: *Marx referred to this as a use value exchange value contradiction (silence) the displaced persons and migrant labourers have a commercial value but not a human value which creates your experiencing of a double bind*

Steven: *the thought of that makes me feel sick, really I am beginning to have sleepless nights over this thing. How are we going to change something that has been here for generations? I remember my father going to work up at the reservoir while my mother had to care for us alone and take care of the vegetable garden. We had little money and ate soup most days. It was a struggle, and many people remember this and it makes them angry. I know that these feelings are unjust but then I work with these children every day and I know who they are and **that they did not ask for their lives to turn into hell. I just don't know what to do** (silence) maybe we just took on too much (puts hands over face and leans forward). We are obviously up against moving the (mountain) with a wheelbarrow*

Within the fourth workshop the facilitator Joan came forward with a touching metaphor as she appealed for a closer relation between the facilitators and the mothers. Her discussion is benchmarked 3 as she is still reflecting on the outside characteristics of the mothers and is perhaps lacking in the tools to be able to make a developmental shift. The shifts for her are

perhaps harder as she is retired and so had lived within the society when it was still mostly homogenous.

Facilitator Joan: *When I read this sentence there is the teacher and the regional (Home-School) coordinator and there are therefore two forms of authority, and **the mother and facilitator do not know in whom they are meant to place their confidence.** I mean, really I insist on this, **a relationship needs to be constructed between the facilitator and the mother and for the moment we are only a 'trait d'union', a hyphen***

**In session 6** there were several very strong conflicting situations between Wendy and Thomas. The conflict accentuated the shift, giving the former breaking-away movement more energy. Wendy finally moves away from her former double bind and chooses a new way of making sense of her situation. A shift is visible in her initial use of the personal pronoun 'we' as she spoke of the nationals and then moved to included her parents as being part of her world. She admits that she had not understood what they were experiencing thinking that they were being stubborn aligning with the categorisations and abstractions common in the mainstream society. I gave this discussion a bench marker 3, **'focus on immigrant mothers and their children's experience and intentions** and a **resolution to a critical conflict.**

Wendy: *That is not true, as my parents suffer from the system, but I have had times when I was very angry with them as they just or at least I thought that they didn't make any attempt to change their position. But after this CL I realise that it is not as it all appears, or well I did sort of know this in my head somewhere but it was easier to go with the rest. I mean, it didn't look good to support your parents against the system as it could have brought trouble. I mean, no one said this but we are all aware of this somehow*

Later on within the same session Steven voices a Fourth order contradiction as the participants design and prepare the implementation of their new model based on trust and expansive perceptions of mothers and their children as well as the other participants. The protected area that he refers to is that of the Change Laboratory where the participants are guided through their struggles and conflicts and new tools are proposed whilst others emerge.

Steven: *Well let's be honest, outside of this **protected area** the rest is a political fight and I think that if we can begin by showing some positive results within this frame then we could argue for freer laws concerning employment and residential status.*

Steven's search for a practical solution was a way of resolving his former double bind that he had experienced when discussing the national parents and schools. However, he articulates a desire to generalise their new object and activity that he is envisioning at the ideal level, in the future. The discursive action is a resolution to a critical conflict experienced by Steven. The following conversation is an extract that follows the use of a second stimulus that turned the conversation to the school arena (see session 6 within chapter 3).

Steven: *We are not free of these kinds of differences even in our public schools the region of (name with held) have a large number of upper middle class young parents with very strong ideas on how children should learn; in fact, they tell the teachers how to do it and this is causing unlimited amounts of chaos*

Intervention-researcher: *Where do you think that these parents obtained their ideas on how children gain knowledge?*

Steven: *Well it must come from some books or something as they all seem to have the same approach*

Intervention-Researcher: *What is their approach?*

Steven: ***Actually, I am not sure***

Thomas: ***They think that they know better than the teachers, that is all. Whatever the teachers do or say, or if they punish their spoiled brats, it is always seen as wrong and the kids are out of control***

Steven, in the following extract, demonstrates that he resolved the critical conflict, 'finding new personal sense and negotiating new meaning', that he experienced within the previous session. The above discussion afforded him the possibility of stabilising his emotional experience of rupture and double bind as the mainstream parents are also perceived as 'causing harm'. He could then empathise with the immigrants without feeling guilty of not being loyal to all those previous mainstream generations that had suffered. I benchmarked the discursive actions at level 3 **'Focus on immigrant mothers and their children's experience and intentions'**.

Steven: *I think that these parents believe in internal motivation and reducing negative punishment, but in reality they appear to have lost control of their creative brats and they are*

*running wild. The department had to intervene and called a meeting with all parents to tell them that school grounds were off limits to them and that they could not call teachers at home to aggress them, etc. (silence) Look I don't think that we should let this thing get on top of us, but it is a problem and I have a night course as well as the parents of children that don't assimilate French at school and I have to work with all these problems. And then there are these teachers that appear to deliberately be obtuse and insist that the foreign parents are stupid and low class and a bad breed and all sort of other things (silence) When I am tired I feel like agreeing with them and then I say 'wake up what are you doing' and a kid comes and takes my hand to show me his drawing of people dead and blood, his is only six, and I realise where he comes from (silence) such a gap, how to make them understand?*

Session 7 was troubling for me as subject positioning was rather intense and I was not entirely sure that I could handle it in the sense that I did not want to hurt people but I was assured that the experience was enriching. In this extract below Victoria has come to terms with their central developmental contradiction. She also attempted to make Wendy feel part of the mainstream group but Wendy had moved into another socio-cognitive space. She was choosing a middle path between the two groups as she became increasingly aware of her position within the mainstream society and at the same time that of her family. Reiterating Du Bois's (1903/2012) words, she saw both situations from within and from above. I used the benchmark 3 for both of these actions as well as resolutions to a critical conflict.

Victoria: *We do otherwise we don't have anyone to make us look good*

Wendy: *And this is being translated by all sorts of negative behaviour towards them so that then we feel that our laws of exclusion are justified and we don't have to see them but they are accepted so that we look good... ugghh... and so our activity is riddled with worms as teachers are part of this thought, and oh (swears), well I am sort of not so bad as I was only born here (laughter)*

Victoria: *Oh no Wendy, you are not getting out of this one, you know that by living here from the beginning you are corrupted as you don't really know any other way of thinking*

Wendy: *That is not true, as my parents suffer from the system, but I have had times when I was very angry with them as they just or at least I thought that they didn't make any attempt to change their position. But after this CL I realise that it is not as it all appears, or well I did sort of know this in my head somewhere but it was easier to go with the rest. I mean, it didn't*



*look good to support your parents against the system as it could have brought trouble. I mean, no one said this but we are all aware of this somehow*

Victoria: *Sorry Wendy, I was sort of just joking with you*

In Session 8, Wendy resolved her double bind, the desire to be considered Swiss and in so doing rejecting her family and personal history, which had translated through the sessions into a critical personal conflict of having to choose between aligning with the mainstream society or with the immigrants and she situated herself firmly on both sides. Her anger attested to just how critical the conflict was to her and was resolved through making new meanings and sense of her former cognitive positioning. I am not sure whose pretention she is referring to but it could well be that articulated by Thomas which provoked thoughts of her own pretention. Her explosive discussions acted as a natural agentive second stimulus for the other participants, as did Thomas's repeated rejection and abstract thinking of the immigrant mothers and their children.

Thomas: *I have had enough of all the moaning. Why not just say it the way it is? We keep on with this theory, but it is a good thing; it **fills a job specification and allows for research** that is at the moment asked for around this part of the world. But we all know the reality*

Wendy: *I can't believe what I am hearing. Did you fall on your head or have you been converted by the (central right political party)? I thought that you were socialist or green, and you actually are a candidate. You make me want to be sick*

Thomas: ***Wendy, I think that you are overstepping your place***

Wendy: *Oh so **what is my place, back in Somalia?** And if it is here... since when are you in charge? **I thought we were working together,** but you appear to think that you are the only one that knows what integration means... well actually you don't as you have never lived outside of this very small town... **I am sick of this pretentiousness***

The movements incurred by the different participants were of great interest during the above two sets of analysis. I understood that it was impossible to appreciate the internal dynamics of the subject positioning without including the perspective of individuals not only moving in relation to their material object (production) of their activity but also in relation to their categorizations or concepts of immigrant mothers and their children juxtaposed to activities that they did not necessarily share with the other participants of the Home-School activity. At

this moment in the Change Laboratory session the Home-School activity is the leading activity, the one that is driving change, but at another moment it may take second place (Leontiev, 1978) within the individual-collective sense making process such as when Steven discusses his students paintings; Victoria her work in the remedial classes and Wendy her own parents and her life as an immigrant person. I placed the movements from abstract to concrete thinking and the discursive actions into Table 4.6 below.

*Table 4.6 Individual-collective movements from abstract to concrete thinking through the resolution of dilemmas, conflicts, double binds and critical conflicts.*

<b>Individual subject and session</b>	<b>Discursive action</b>	<b>Abstract to concrete benchmarks</b>
<b>Thomas S1</b>	conflict/ dilemma	benchmark 0
<b>Wendy S1</b>	dilemma	benchmark 1
<b>Steven S1</b>	dilemma	benchmark 0
<b>Victoria S1</b>	conflict	benchmark 0
<b>Thomas S2</b>	dilemma	Benchmark0
<b>Wendy S2</b>	personal critical conflict	benchmark 2
<b>Victoria S2</b>	dilemma	benchmark 0 & 1
<b>Wendy S3</b>	dilemma-denial resolution	benchmark 2 & 3
<b>Steven S3</b>	dilemma-conflict	benchmark 1
<b>Wendy S4</b>	double bind-resolving critical conflict	benchmark 3
<b>Thomas S4</b>	dilemma	benchmark 0
<b>Victoria S4</b>	double bind	benchmark 3
<b>Steven S4</b>	conflict	benchmark 3
<b>Wendy S5</b>	resolution critical conflict	benchmark 3
<b>Victoria S5</b>	critical conflict resolution	benchmark 3
<b>Steven S6</b>	resolution conflict & double bind	benchmark 3
<b>Wendy S7</b>	critical conflict resolution	benchmark 3
<b>Victoria S7</b>	critical conflict resolution	benchmark 3
<b>Wendy S8</b>	critical conflict resolution	benchmark 3
<b>Thomas S8</b>	dilemma	benchmark 1

Each discursive action that indicated a shift was benchmarked relying on Bateson's (1972) learning levels from 0 to 3: Learning level 0 refers to the participants' focusing on mothers and their children's properties; learning level 1 refers to the participants' focusing on relationships between factors; learning level 2 shifts to a focus on the overall external situation

of the immigrant mothers and their children and learning level 3 refers to a focus on immigrant mothers and their children's experience and intentions. The turns of talk were important moments during the session and created a rippling effect when other participants felt the emotions of their own double bind.

The movements were then placed into Figure 4.5 below in order to demonstrate how individuals do not necessarily move in one big lump but dialectically oppose, struggle, experience and contest others in the process of development.

#### **4.4 Analysis 4: subject positioning**

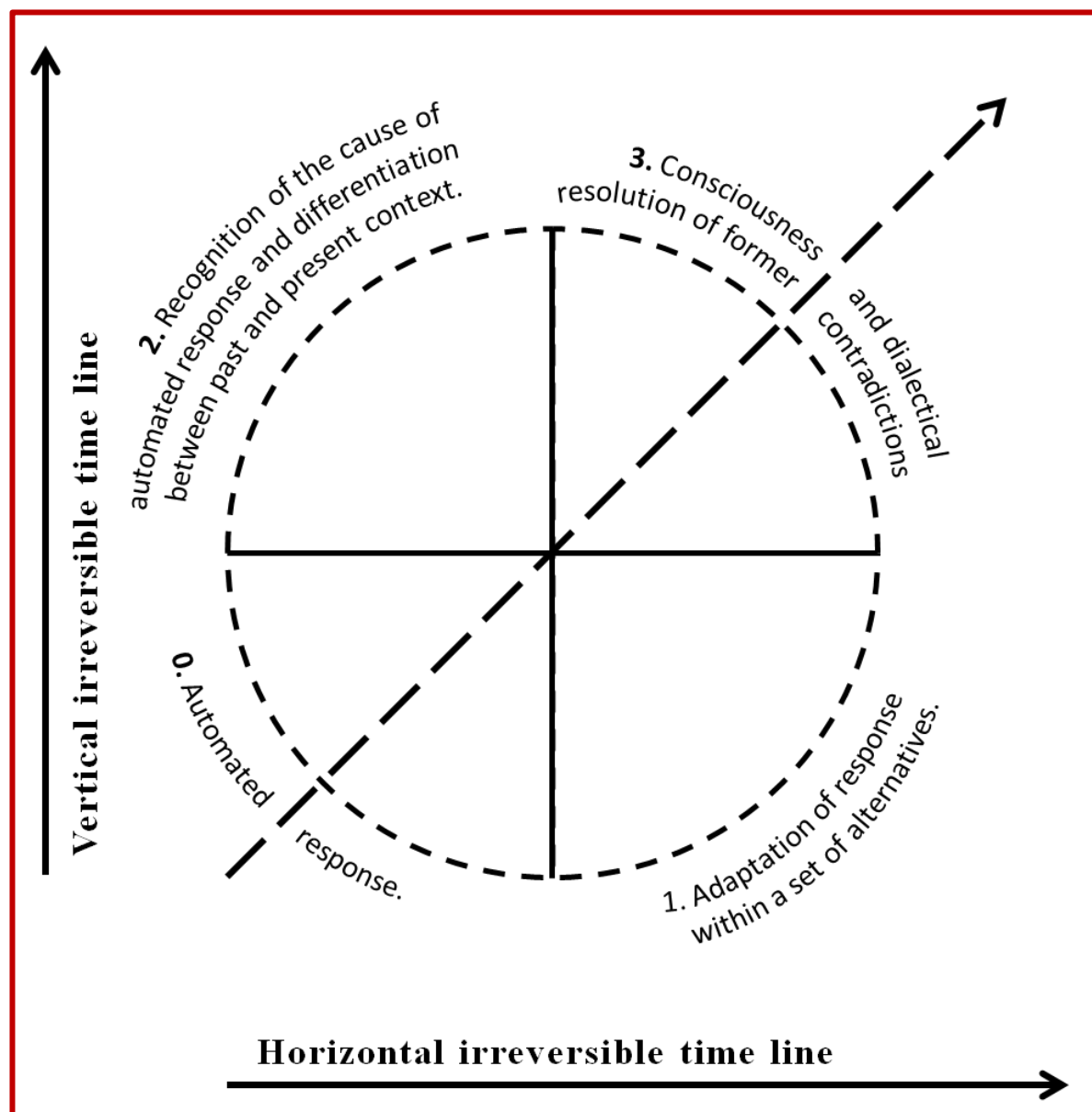
In Activity theory the use of artefacts depends on the subjects' position within the division of labour. This interpretation of how a subject can position him or herself is similar to that of Bourdieu (1977) and his notion of cultural capital. However, as Nikiforov (2009) argued (see above) it is ludicrous to imagine that human beings are locked into a society and homogenously conditioned by its structure. Aligning to this perspective would discredit individual creativity. Bernstein (1990) refers to social positioning as the establishment of a person's relation to other people and their formation of psychosocial dispositions within a given activity. In his elaboration of a descriptive language that tracks subject positioning he evokes the roles of power which maintains and creates boundaries. He argues that Vygotsky's work and all that follows, including activity theory, are not appropriate analytical tools. However, the works of Bernstein (2000) are too structural, running the danger of once more loosing the human being. It is for this reason that I refuted his propositions and adopted Engeström and Saanino's (2011) proposition of discursive actions that are verbal manifestations of contradictions.

Cultural Historical Activity Theory relies on the theoretical premises of Vygotsky, Leontiev, Davydov and Bateson. My previous analyses have done the same although they have argued that another reading is possible and that a language of discursive actions as a language of analysis opened a possibility to reach this objective. My unit of analysis is therefore the participants' personal sense making, his or her emotional semiotic declarations of social positioning, in other words, of actions and their psychosocial effects (Roth et al., 2008). This dynamic personal-collective movement is captured within a model (see Figure 4.1 on page 206). This model was designed to capture individual-collective development during a Change

Laboratory intervention. It could also be used in any other research tracking human development but this remains to be tested. The four different quadrants identify four developmental possibilities taken from Bateson's (1973) levels of logic. In the analyses above I have demonstrated that these four quadrants can represent subject positioning to political models of integration that reveal the rights of nationals and immigrants; of the categorisations that are consequences of the socio-political application of these models and of the immigrants psychosocial wellbeing. The sphere in the figure represents the learning space, a liminal space where new learning actions take place. Liminality refers to a space between a former state of being and a future state of being, it is the transition period in which reflection and development takes place (Van Genneep, 1909).

Gutiérrez (2008) refers to such as space as a third space. The space is represented by a dotted line as it is open to the wider context. Furthermore, the use of broken line shows that an activity is not a closed unit but is interlinked to a macro and micro cosmos and to a historical network. The vertical irreversible time refers to development in the Vygotskian sense, that is, a movement to more expansive concrete forms of thinking. It is irreversible as once learning produces development one cannot go back (Davydov, 1999). The dotted line going across the sphere captures an ideological trajectory to the object of the activity but as demonstrated below, individuals move between many concepts and at certain moments side step, rethink and reiterate their social positions. I use the time lines to maintain the perspective that change does not take place all at once, finding its resolution in a final product (Markova, 2005).

Engeström (1996) sees horizontal learning as taking place in a developmental process of boundary crossing, when participants learn to cross social and cultural borders between different activity systems and come to share a common object. In this sense, the formation of theoretical knowledge and concepts are not to be confused with hierarchical learning models but rather as both vertical and horizontal, and in so being, afford a possibility of overcoming dualisms found in concepts of nationalism such as *us* and *other*. This movement becomes possible due to the horizontal dimension that occur across boundaries through multi-voiced dialogue and a re-orchestration of those voices, of their different viewpoints and approaches to come to a common consensus on the way forward. It is therefore the reconstruction of multiple mind sets towards a common object (Edwards, 2009).



*Figure 4.4 Subject positioning model*

Vertical learning in Developmental Work Research (Engeström, 1995) is not deterministic but rather a reality that needs to be contended with at the same time and should be understood as containing processes of power and resistance. Edwards (2009) maintains that vertical spaces are to be seen as boundary spaces that are sites of struggle, identity and knowledge which require attending to the ‘personal contradictions’ as people position themselves and make new meanings in relation to the discussions of others within and between networked activities. As already articulated in chapter 3, her argument differs from that proposed by Engeström (1995) who articulates his verticality through the economic or exchange value of the activity and not as the subjects who identify their use value and find new ways of elaborating this (Edwards, 2010). The process of subject positioning is demonstrated in the model below (Figure 4.5).

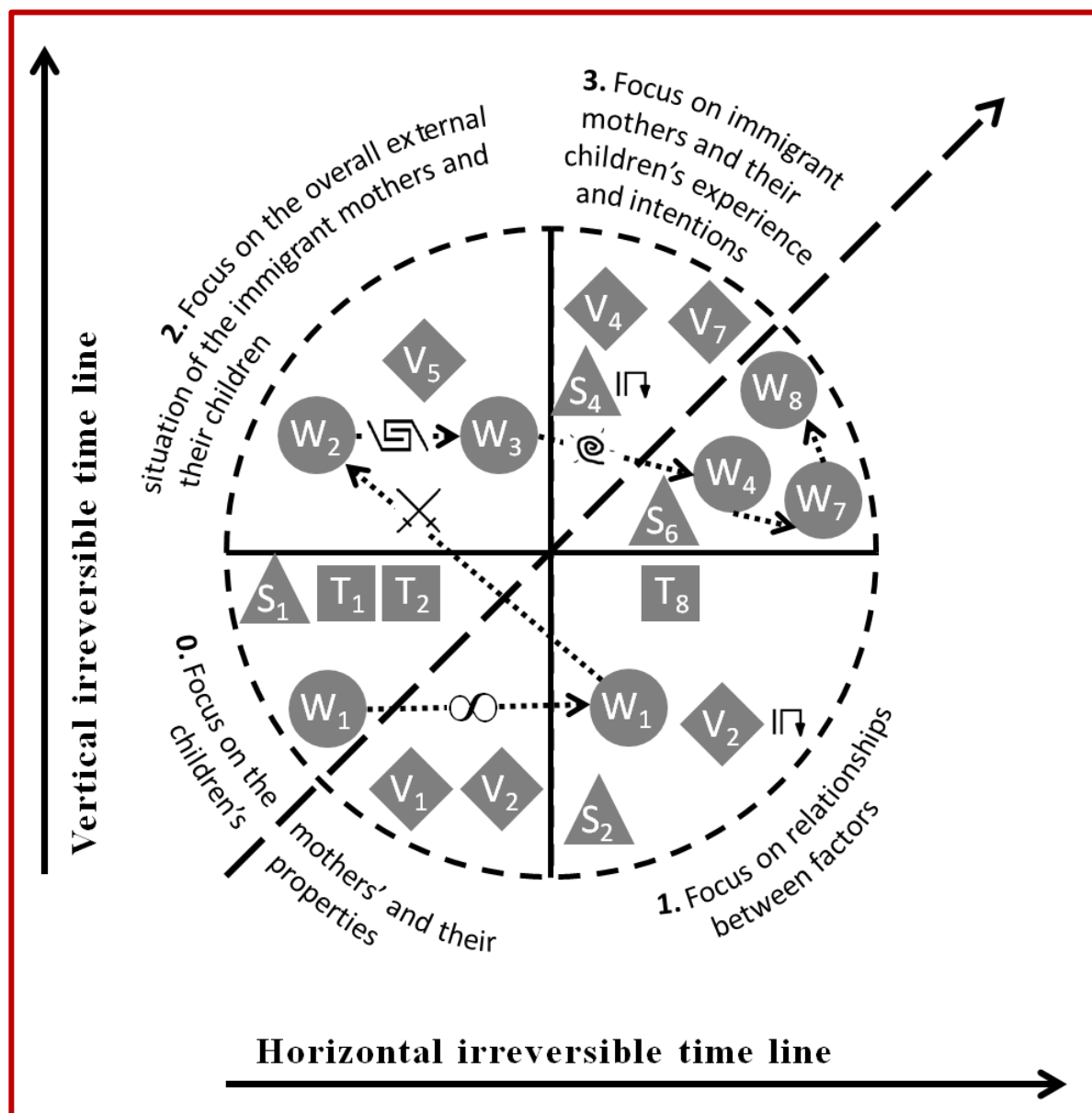











Figure 4.5 Subject positioning

In the legend of Figure 4.5 below, beginning from the bottom, the symbol for infinity was used to represent the resolution of a dilemma as it is simply a link between two things: the resolution of a double bind represents two hands that are collaborating, that is two opposing needs that find a solution. Conflicts are represented by the symbol of war two swords where one of the parties succumbs to the power of the other; the resolution of critical conflicts are represented by a spiral that evolves from the internal to the external and illustrates the resolution of the highest form of conflict, the deepest level of emotions (Vygotsky, 1998) and its resolution, the highest feeling of balance (Zittoun, 2006). The line with an arrowed line in

the form of an open square signifies a person (single line) moving away momentarily from his or her previously announced position.

The different shapes identify four of the participants (Wendy, Victoria, Thomas and Steven) that took part in the Learning Change laboratory of the Home-School project. Vygotsky (1978, 1986) identified development as including radical alterations in the very persons' structure of behaviour as well as carrying out the responses in a new way, that is to say, drawing on new instruments of "behaviour and replacing one psychological function by another" (p.73). I deem that it is possible to say that development has taken place when a participant no longer reverted to momentarily using the verbal actions illustrated by the bench markers 0 and 1 and demonstrated increased use of bench markers 2 and finally 3. New ways of resolving problems with the use of the conceptual and material tools provided within the Change Laboratory and increasingly over a period of one year (time of the 10 sessions) in order to transform their own activity system and the interconnecting activity systems is a solid marker for development (Engeström, 1987; 1999). The number within each shape represents the session in which a shift towards, or a side stepping of, a more empathetic and expansive conception of immigrant mothers and their children took place.

Legend	
	Wendy
	Victoria
	Thomas
	Steven
	Sidestepping
	Resolution of a conflict
	Resolution of critical conflict that demonstrates development
	Resolution of a double bind
	Resolution of a dilemma

I shall now analyse Wendy's developmental trajectory as an illustration of how the above model works. The analysis makes use of the same discursive actions and benchmarkers as in the former three analyses of this section.

In session 1, Wendy, through the resolution of a dilemma, shifted to comparing the immigrant mothers to the mainstream society. She was focusing on the mothers' and their children's properties and did not contest existing social practices. Further discussions and stimuli in session 1 encouraged her to shift her focus on relationships between factors. She began to question the existing practices towards immigrants. She then, in session two, experienced a personal critical conflict. Dilemmas, conflict, double binds and critical conflicts created psychic tension (see Bateson, 1973; Zittoun, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978) which drive the person to finding a solution in order to reduce the emotions. "Emotions are the most crucial for a social conception of the individual. Most often emotions are considered our very private domain - as well as a sort of colouring of our experiences or actions, which it is impossible to communicate to others - as a last resort of resistance, when a society crushes our natural instincts with cultural demands... emotions give direction to the action" (Axel, 1997, p.143)

Wendy's emotions were strong indicators of her need to reformulate her socio-political concept of self. Wendy momentarily resolved her conflict by focusing on the overall external situation of the immigrant mothers and their children. She moved to Bateson's level two of logic and a pluralist view of integration. Wendy attempted to resolve the conflict by forming new practical solutions to the problem. None the less, when Thomas articulated perceptions of immigrant mothers and their children Wendy experienced a higher emotional state expressed in her angry verbal outburst at Thomas. Wendy was caught in the conundrum between her desire and her reality; she was not a Swiss as all other Swiss. She was classified and socially labelled as a refugee person and had certain socio-political rules and consequences attached to her life such as not having a passport and not being able to leave the country. Furthermore, Wendy and Victoria held several confrontations and both expanded their conceptions of immigrant mothers and their children which are demonstrated with the representative shapes of Victoria and Wendy being benchmarked above 3 in sessions 4 and 7. Wendy's resolutions of her personal critical conflict as being an immigrant, occurred between sessions 3 and 4 and she finally accepted a new way of being, focusing on immigrant mothers and their children's experience and intentions. Her position towards mothers was important as it shifted to include



her own mother whom she thought previously was not making an effort to become part of the mainstream or national society. Wendy moved to accept a view of herself which could be defined as cosmopolitan, a place without national boundaries where the best is desired for all citizens of the world (Appiah, 2006) and thereby going beyond mere ideologies of multiculturalism.

Steven and Victoria reached this level as well in session 4 however Steven then sidestepped from this position as he became afraid of social repercussions. Victoria confirmed her new perceptions of immigrant mothers and their children in session 7.

Although Steven and Victoria's discursive actions and material actions were indicative of a shift to a more cosmopolitan view of what being a national and an immigrant entails, it remained to be seen at the end of the Change Laboratory how they would appropriate their new object in the months to follow. Thomas, on the other hand, never made any dramatic shifts moving only horizontally and between learning level 1 and 1. His resistance was discussed previously.

This chapter dealt with the analysis of the Home-School Change Laboratory sessions. The analysis tracked the participants shifting conceptions of the immigrant mothers and their children to one that was more expansive, one that afforded new possibilities for nationals and immigrants alike. I began my analysis using discursive actions that represent primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary contradictions. The decrease in the frequency of conflicts dilemmas and double binds demonstrate a shift from abstract to more concrete forms of thinking about the object and therefore confirm the idea that development takes place due to a rupture with former feelings of well being and in order to find a new balance new solutions need to be created that did not exist previously (Vasilyuk, 1988/1992). Actions in Leontiev's (1978) approach are said to be at the individual/ personal level and so I adopt the position that discursive actions allow an analysis of the participant's personal shifts, of dialectical movement (Hegel, 1969) within the process.

These shifts were punctuated with interruptions, side stepping, and other forms of discontinuities while the participants repositioned themselves (Marx, 1975; Bernstein, 1935/1967e). I moved my analysis to individual subjects' shifts between 4 different political models

of integration; ethnist, assimilation, pluralist and cosmopolitanism which were discussed in chapter 1 of this thesis. In order to demonstrate the relevance of my argument and to bring the analysis back to the consequences of political models in human actions and intentions, I drew on the works of Tolman (1981) and Olson (1999, 2003) in order to construct four bench markers that could indicate participants' shifts (see Virkkunen, Newnham, Nleya & Engeström, 2012). However, instead of just numbering them 1 to 4 I added the concept of learning proposed by Bateson (2000) as perceiving relations of concepts in more concrete forms implies shifts in levels of learning and without these levels I could not discuss development. Developmental levels needed to be linked to political models and to their psychosocial consequences. In other words, the analysis needed to be given a language of analysis (Daniels, 2005). After having carried out an overall analysis of the discursive actions, political positions of individual participants and the 4 bench-markers of different forms of thinking I chose to analyse, using both measurements, four participants in particular. These participants were four of the project holders and their dynamics were interesting as they converged and evolved in a dynamic entanglement, one dropping to the side and the others struggling towards expansion. The analysis moves back and forward between individual and collective planes in order to overcome the existing dualism between process ontology of the social world and the inseparability of the individual and the group (Sawyer, 2002) found within the Cultural Historical Activity Theory.

The results allow me to state that the combination of concepts such as immigrant mothers, deficient immigrant school children and integration, result in a compound "entangled with strong images and connotations" (Haider & Bawden, 2007, p.536) which can be put together in several forms depending on the interest of different groups. The forms are enacted during the reworking of the object concept and ensue in discursive actions that manifest conflicts, critical conflicts, dilemmas and double binds. All of these discursive actions rely on the different participants' personal historical experiences, for example when Steven refers to the difficult times that people in the region lived previously and how this influenced the ways in which they perceive foreigners. Many Swiss nationals accept a political model of assimilation (Dasen, 2001) without questioning the repercussion for the immigrant populations. Environmental separation of migrant and refugee populations from that of Swiss nationals leaves little ground for change to take place. Retooling of this concept within a Change Laboratory demonstrated that people residing in a social climate are able to approach their

historically and culturally induced conceptions to one that is more expansive such as found in the concepts of a perspective of cosmopolitanism, as proposed by Appiah (2006).

The analysis of the subject positioning to their expanding object and the networked activities demonstrates that each participant develops individually and collectively as they make personal sense of social stimuli, as they coordinate previously fragmented conceptions of self (Bernstein, 1935/1967e). In this way this text makes a contribution to the ongoing debate between two opposing perspectives of the Social Cultural and Historical theories of human development; process ontology of the social world and inseparability of the individual from the collective (Sawyer, 2002). I shall now elaborate and debate on this discussion in chapter 5 as it requires added theoretical support.

## CHAPTER 5      DISCUSSION, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

*“I’ll break open the story and tell you what is there. Then, like the others that have fallen out onto the sand, I will finish with it, and the wind will take it away. Nisa”* (Shostak, 1990)

Drawing on the works of several noted human developmental scholars, this chapter begins with a discussion on experiencing, sense-making, meaning, learning and development. These concepts are then used to support a claim that political models of integration function as strong socio-cultural conceptual tools. Conceptual tools shape social values that are often contradictory with other social values; they shape perceptions of others and guide behaviour. Whereas the said behaviour can have positive outcomes for the populations concerned, only too often they are negative, painful and discriminatory. This claim, furthermore, illustrates how the categorizations that ensue from these policies are experienced by those that carry the label. It is then discussed whether this label is necessary using the works of Du Bois (1919) and Bakhtin (1981).

Following on from this discussion and relying on my demonstration (in chapter 4 of this thesis) of how different political models are based on different levels of logic (Bateson, 1998), I argue that in order to free people from its tyranny these concepts need to be retooled (Warmington, 2009). Changing historically created socio-cultural concepts that have taken on forms of operations and automatic thinking, need to be tweaked to the level of communicative questioning to be replaced with a higher level of logic. In other words, changing historically created concepts that contain a central notion of *who we are* requires people to become engaged in the problem, they need to confront their experiences in problematic terms and to expand on their former ways of experiencing. It follows that by neglecting the double concept contained within semiotic actions, personal development is masked by collective material productivity and that a return to an analysis of individual speech actions within a collective discourse, as proposed by Vygotsky, affords the possibility of analysing personal development or subject positioning.

The discussion that follows introduces the need for an analysis of subject positioning in Change Laboratory methodology. The debate relies on Engeström’s interpretation of the

works of Vygotsky (1987) and Leontiev (1978) on which, he argues, Developmental Work Research has its foundations in order to demonstrate that a “strong form of inseparability is theoretically problematic and empirically untenable” and that an analysis of the social individual-collective subject affords a greater elaboration of the concept of socio-cultural human development. I conclude that socioculturalists can resolve these tensions by adopting an *analytic dualism* that retains key sociocultural commitments (Sawyer, 2002).

The outcomes of the research carried out for this thesis are then discussed. Finally, the chapter briefly takes a look at voluntary organisations and economically driven organisations and the implication of this in Cultural Historical Activity Theory. The concept of the interventionist researcher and my position as a participant within the Change Laboratory process is discussed. Finally, further uses for the intervention and study of Change Laboratory methodology in voluntary organisations, as well as amongst other groups of people that deal with critical real life situations, (Vasilyuk, 1991) are proposed and a conclusion follows ending with the limits and contributions of this study and a final word.

### **5.1 Experiencing, sense making and political concepts**

As discussed in chapter 4, Vygotsky (1978) wrote that the word’s sense is located in a person’s inner speech. It is internal and is the aggregate of all of the psychological factors that arise in our consciousness as a result of reflecting on the word. Sense, he maintains, is dynamic and fluid, it is non-static, and it continually evolves and changes form and relates to several zones of meaning. A meaning is therefore only one of the zones of sense. Meaning is more stable and communal, sense is more personal. Furthermore, Vygotsky (1978) added that, while tools are oriented towards changing the object, signs are oriented towards mastering one’s own psychological activity and that higher psychological functions refer to the “combination of tool and sign in psychological activities” (p. 55). An individual’s personal sense changes through experiencing, in all its forms, with historically constituted social, cultural and political semiotic and material artefacts.

The Russian word ‘perezhivanie’ is translated as a lived experience; it is a process of psychological functions that define what is going on, a process of sense-making. McDermott (1981) gives the following example: “I start and am flustered by a noise heard. Empirically, that noise is fearsome; it really is, not merely phenomenally or subjectively so. That is what it

is experienced as being. But, when I experience the noise as a known thing, I find it to be innocent of harm. It is the tapping of a shade against the window, owing to movements of the wind. The experience has changed; that is, the thing experienced has changed - not that an unreality has given place to a reality, nor that some transcendental (inexperienced) reality has changed, not that the truth has changed, but just and only the concrete reality experienced has changed" (p. 243). The change from being afraid to a feeling of not being afraid due to making sense of what was going on out there is "a change of experienced existence effected through the medium of cognition" (McDermott, 1981, p. 243). This example illustrates that in an emotional experience there are two elements, an indivisible unity of personal characteristics and situational characteristics (Vygotsky, 1994). Vygotsky (1994) described *perezhivanie* as:

"(t)he emotional experience arising from any situation or from any aspect of his environment, determines what kind of influence this situation or this environment will have on the child. Therefore, it is not any of the factors themselves (if taken without the reference of the child) which determines how they will influence the future course of his development, but the same factors refracted through the prism of the child's emotional experience" (pp. 338-339).

In this way he explains how cognition, environment and emotion are intermingled. Vygotsky died before being able to develop this concept further.

Drawing on his works and those of Leontiev, Vasilyuk (1991) proposed to conceive of experiencing as a particular activity that consisted of a person restoring equilibrium by resurrecting the lost meaning of existence. For him experiencing involves a form of inter-subjectivity in which people gain foresight into how to solve problems by inserting themselves into the life histories of others. These life histories of the experiences of others function as psychic tools to navigate in the environment. Furthermore, he (1991) maintained that people have different constitutional characteristics and that, on the bases of these, their emotional experiencing of the same object will not be the same. Experiencing, he maintained (1988) is an internal and subjective labour which involves the whole of life or a state of consciousness. Despite his important contribution to this concept he never moved beyond the non-technical definition (Robbins, 2007a).

Schechner (1985) added onto the concept proposed by Vasilyuk and stated that restored behaviour is “me behaving as if I am someone else” (p.37). Wendy, for example proclaimed that she had attempted to climb out of her skin, to be someone else. Heeding the concept above, she attempted to restore a balance in her experiencing of being a refugee child excluded from the privileges reserved for Swiss nationals. Schechner (1985) suggested that there are three phases to the process of restoring: “the past ...is recreated in terms not simply of the present, but of a future...This future is the performance being rehearsed, the ‘finished thing’ to be made graceful through editing, repetition, and intervention. Restored behaviour is both teleological and eschatological. It joins first causes to what happens at the end of time” (p. 79). Cole (2007) referred to this movement as “temporally double sided” as it allows a person to raise him or herself up and above the present, momentarily suspended above and beyond oneself to a liminal space of reconstruction (Schechner, 1985). An example of this occurrence is to be found in Bakhtin’s (1981) analysis of the transformation of an illiterate peasant’s concept of self (see discussion below). Wendy, Victoria and Steven had to reconstruct their memory of their past and to envision the future as being different, as no longer containing the same concepts of self and other. This change is development, the creation of something new.

Van der Veer (2001) wrote that the concept of *perezhivanie*, developed by Vygotsky, “captures the idea of development by insisting on the ever-changing character of interpretations or emotional experiences” (p. 103). Development is understood to be the continuous unfolding of more and more complex activities, covering still greater fields of action. Furthermore, social development has a history; it is punctuated by particular circumstances. Dewey (1938) held the same perspective of experiencing as did Vygotsky, stating that the concept was strengthened by the notion of mediation “since an existence... is the support and vehicle of a meaning and is a symbol instead of a merely physical existence only in this respect, embodied meanings or ideas are capable of objective survey and development” (p. 231). In this way development is assisted by social, cultural and historical artefacts as mediators of sense making. One of these artefacts can be seen as political integration models.

Political integration models contain rules and values of both nationals and immigrants. They overtly and covertly place people into psychosocial spaces of double consciousness. Relying on Hegel, Du Bois described double consciousness as a “subjectivity both sundered and fused, an identity divided by forces originating both within and outside the self” (Winant, 2004, p.2).

The relationship embodies simultaneously both antagonism and interdependence. The interdependence is tacit and in my reading of Du Bois (1919), tacit knowledge, referred to as ‘shadows’, mediates experience. Tacit knowledge is a mediating factor in human development. Ethnist and assimilation models of integration force immigrant populations to live behind a veil (Du Bois, 1903/2012). Behind that veil is “the meaning of its religion, the passion of its human sorrow, and the struggle of its greater souls” (p.1). Du Bois’ (1903) use of the veil operates at a micro and a macro level of social development; “(t)he veil not only divides the individual self; it also fissures the community, nation, and society as a whole (and ultimately, world society in its entirety). The veil’s antagonisms, however, are also thoroughgoing interrelationships, such that it not only splits self and world along the ‘colour-line,’ but simultaneously founds the self and produces the social world” (Winant, 2004, pp.1-2). Moreover, the veil is both a barrier and a connection between the white and the black. It protected the wearer from white violence and domination. If questioned it serves as a mirror to both the oppressed and the oppressor.

Despite post World War II efforts to suppress acts and ideologies of racism, nation states revert (see chapter 1) once more to more discriminatory forms of integration arguing that multiculturalism is ineffective. Such shifts are phenomena of a crisis and reflect the dominating system’s need to cancel out the other as a means of preserving his original certainty. In times of insecurity the need for the preservation of self become more dominant. Racism offers an immediately available classificatory framework that is useful in establishing a labelled “‘group position’ in respect to a great variety of issues: resource distribution, group demographic differences and territoriality, political power, cultural practices, etc.”...and “thus racial identity is not merely an instrument of rule; it is also an arena and medium of social practice. It is an aspect of individual and collective selfhood” (Winant, 2004, p.11) and thereby codes everyday life in an infinite number of ways. “Racism remains, in short, because it still ‘pays off’ in substantial ways, even under the putatively anti-racist consensus of the 21<sup>st</sup> century” (Winant, 2004, p.13). The subaltern retains an important exchange value for Western nation states.

The work covered in the former four chapters presented the concept of integration models as a psychological tool that is intertwined into all social and political institutions and which is carried around from person to person as they appropriate the concept in different forms in



order to make sense of their world. The integration concept of assimilation, where the immigrant is understood as having to take up the ways of the national group, to leave his or her ways aside and to not interfere with the ways of the nationals, was implemented within the area in which this study took place. Generally, Swiss nationals are strongly hegemonic. As discussed previously, I use the term referring to the concept of socio-cultural hegemony as proposed in Marxist philosophy, to describe the domination of a socio-culturally diverse society, in this case due to the arrival of immigrant populations, by the ruling class. The Swiss nationals themselves manipulate their own society and those of the immigrant groups, their beliefs, explanations, values and more, in an endeavour to promote the Swiss nationals way of being as a legitimate worldview. As a legitimate social, political and economic status quo that is natural and beneficial for everyone rather than an exploitative society that makes use of immigrants as cheap labour. Gramsci (1992) in his collection of essays, *Prison notebook*, maintained that these norms should not be perceived as natural and should be overcome by recognition of the artificiality of their premises, of their philosophical roots as instruments of socio-cultural dominance. The question that remains is how such recognition is to come about as immigrants under the influence of such systems experience their socio-cultural worlds as conflicting, indeed, as rivals. This experiencing produces a *double consciousness* (Du Bois, 1903/ 2012) whereas, should it not rather articulate a *double voice* (Bakhtin, 1981)?

I say this as interpretations of Du Bois' texts attempt to align his *double consciousness* with that of Bakhtin's (1981) *double voice*, treating double voice as the language that constitutes double consciousness. However, this *false* articulation offers a way forward. In reading Du Bois through Bakhtin, "the social discrimination that defines subaltern positionality is, in fact, the necessary condition for an epistemological privilege that in turn brings with it a new possibility for social and personal empowerment. The move from subaltern disempowerment to individual self empowerment is accomplished... with the help of an idealised mediating term: voice is nothing less than the authentic de-essentialised self, made manifest" (Hale, 1994, p. 448). In this way theorists attempt to infuse the Du Boisian veiled human person into a Bakhtinian person of self articulation. Du Bois' (1903) *negro* is one of no true self-consciousness that lives through the eyes of another, through his experiencing of this other's experiencing of self. Such conditions of living are experienced by immigrants living within a nation state that applies ethnist or assimilation models of integration. Hale (1994) paraphrasing Du Bois, wrote: "It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, this sense

of always looking at one's self through the eyes of the others, of measuring one's soul by the type of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity... two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (p. 450). In this way Du Bois only allows the *negro* to suffer this psychic schism without any apparent cure. Bakhtin's (1981) *illiterate peasant* tells another tale. The peasant initially does not recognise his oppressed position until he begins to articulate his needs through the language of the oppressors. The language becomes a mediating tool through which he comes to recognise his dividedness as being within and between these competing languages. The emotions afforded by his discovery develop his need to actively choose an orientation among them. He does not veil himself but is actively able to transcend his social position due to the provision and recognition of different social genre. The key to his transition is in his recognition of the differences. The peasant has semiotic tools at his disposal through which, every "fragment of his identity can become fully visible, which is a far call from Du Bois' veiled and fragmented *negro*. While Bakhtin (1981) offers a conception of psychic transformation which fits in well with developmental theories proposed by Vygotsky (1978) and taken up by Vasilyuk (1988), his interpretive method is too idiosyncratic and dependent on metaphoric terms to use it as an analytical tool. Furthermore, he does not explore the "ramifications of social position, choosing instead a continuum of linguistic self-consciousness" (Hale, 2004, p. 457) of one extreme. What Du Bois and Bakhtin have in common is the mediating potential housed in language related to people's experiencing of social class and oppression. They highlight the mediating positional concepts of oppression on human development.

## 5.2 Putting chat back into CHAT (Cultural Historical Activity Theory)

This chapter began with the introduction of Vygotsky's (1978, 1999) concept of sense, experiencing and emotions as mediating impulses. Vygotsky identified two forms of mediating artefacts: tools and signs of which the distinction, argued Cole (1996), is challenged as remaining unclear. However, the fundamental difference is that discursive mediation takes form as a "transaction between the human participants with respect to the object of their action" (Wells, 2007, p. 160). This perspective differs from that of Leontiev (1987) who illustrated his thesis on human activity with material tools as mediating factors. Whereas the hunter can kill a deer with a bow and arrow, that is to say that the tool has a direct impact on the material object of his or her action, discursive mediation has a direct impact on the psychic

component of human beings and an indirect impact on the material object. “It is quite largely through the participation in events in which speech is used to direct action that infants are initially inducted into the language of their community” (Wells, 1986, p.161). Hutchins (1995) demonstrated how, in ship navigation, adults coordinate their joint actions with the medium of speech. Speech therefore remains not simply a mediating factor but rather a constituting factor. Speech has a double role in human activity as mediator and as creator of human actions (Wells, 2007). Despite Engeström’s (1991, 1999; Engeström & Saanino, 2010) inclusion of verbal actions as mediating artefacts in his concept of activity theory he did not clearly articulate the difference within a semiotic tool, therein neglecting its double role. Instead of the outcome of speech impacting directly on the subject’s action on the object, as demonstrated by Engeström, the initial outcome should be understood as taking place in the human psychic at the level of the ideal and not the material (Cole, 1996). In other words, the action “involves a transaction *between* participating subjects rather than *on* a material object (Wells, 2007, p. 162). R. Engeström (1995) introduced the notion of speech as an action in the construction of meaning with the outcome being social language. The concept of ‘social language’ was gleaned from the works of Bakhtin (1981) who, states Wertch (1991), referred through this concept to “a discourse peculiar to a specific stratum of society within a given social system at a given time” (p.57) much like a genre. This conception of discourse corresponds to Leontiev’s (1987) stratum of human actions in his Tristratal model of activity. The stratum of action might be understood as being a “particular instantiation of a societally organised system of activity that has as motive one of the abiding concerns of human existence in a particular culture at a particular time in its historical trajectory” (Wells, 2007, p.163). The complication linked to this interpretation is that Leontiev (1987) stated that individual actions might have multiple meanings as one and the same action may serve multiple purposes. For example, a person might use the categorisation of refugee person to define his or her personal ownership to a given social status, to implore for the recognition of human rights and as a way to accelerate the listeners understanding of whom is being referred to. The intricacies of these different meanings of the action are only possible to define within the concept of the activity in which it took part. However, with material tools the activity defines the action within speech actions. This is more complicated as speech enters into the activity at the level of operations, that is, their construct contains many facets of fossilised knowledge and so all the implications remain lost to the user.

Identifying speech as composed of several layers; operation, action and activity at the personal level of analysis (Vasilyuk, 1988) affords us the possibility of intercepting subject positioning. That is to say, a person makes use of a categorisation at an operational level. The categorisation has a multitude of connections to each person's personal network of activities both historically, in the present and in the future. The categorisations contain purpose and despite personal differences retain a basic structure that is familiar to all. The operational level points to common consensus, to a social language or genre and to tacit knowledge. For example the exchange value of immigrant labourers as cheap labour is not overtly addressed in public, there are no written laws that this should be the case however, it is common social practice and Swiss nationals that do otherwise are frowned upon as being socially incorrect. Fragmentation of this social language through questioning leads to the second level of Leontiev's (1987) Tristrata actions. As the person identifies the implications of the social language, born and reproduced through collective society during his or her experiencing of the others speech, so his or her genre fragments and is open for transformation. In other words, "(e)xplicit efforts at sense making tend to occur when the current state of the world is perceived to be different from the expected state of the world or when there is no obvious way to engage the world" (Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld (2005, p.409). In the case of the Home-School project it was not material actions toward the immigrant mothers that came under question but semiotic ones. The mothers were not present in the Learning Activity, therefore the material actions were imagined through the interlocutors' speech actions. The participants began to question their perceptions and verbal actions that were emitted as a result of those perceptions.

In human actions and through cooperation (or non-cooperation) towards an emerging collective object the person's speech actions transform as he or she makes sense and experiences (internal activity) the verbal actions of the other. Such an interpretation firstly opens up the possibility of perceiving speech as having two broad but different ways in which it mediates action. "In the first, the discourse facilitates (or sometimes hinders) some form of material action, such as building a house, playing a team game, or navigating a ship into a harbour. In very general terms, the discourse functions to co-construct a possible world" (Bruner, 1986) about which participants share and compare their beliefs, evaluations, and intentions to better understand and possibly improve them or to consider courses of action that might follow. I describe this world as a possible one because, unlike the world in which the

participants are already engaged through material action, in relation to perceptible aspects of the situation the world to which the participants refer is not “necessarily available to sensory perception, but is being created and interpreted through the discourse itself.” (Wells, 2007, p.164). Secondly, it affords the possibility of interpreting subject positioning as each person makes sense of his or her world by experiencing the words, and therein the perceived worlds, of the other. Once common consensus has been reached, the personal-collective discourse activity will once more reduce to the level of operations where it returns to the shadows leaving the path open to a new social language. A social language that represents a political model of integration is constructed historically through incremental operation-action-activity-operation processes. Despite her important contribution, R. Engeström (1995) analysed social language at the level of a collective activity and in so doing neglected its importance as a means of constructing subject position, as she, and others, overstepped participants discursive actions as containing a double role and that material actions are the second step in the process of human development.

The Change Laboratory intervention provided semiotic tools to the participants in order to facilitate their questioning and the reformulation of their socio-cultural praxis. The Swiss nationals’ experiencing of this concept and those of the immigrant populations were decidedly different. Furthermore, Vasilyuk (1991) affirms that each individual’s personal constitutional characteristics colour their emotional experiencing of the same object. People are contradictory “one might believe that persons are socially constituted whilst advocating a political theory based on individual rights; just as one might be a methodological individualist who urges the forging of community.” (Bakhurst & Synowich, 1995, p.9). This argument is contrary to that of Marx (1985) who claimed that the essence of each individual is the whole of social relations. The difference is not minor as, in the former, personhood is a personal-social affair whereas in the latter personhood is a replication of the wider society. That is to say, it is wholly collective and personal differences are ignored, which in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is problematic as there are no untouched societies or homogenous groups, there are only parts of societies that desire to maintain and replicate the way things were. The constituents of societies are continually evolving due to human and technological mobility. The transformations are happening at a faster pace and the accumulations of internal contradictions are on the rise as people chose their ways of thinking, behaving and creating out of an

increasing number of options (Rückriem, 2003). There is therefore a post-modern need to overcome the dualism of individual-collective development and material-semiotic outcomes.

### **5.3 Overcoming the problem of subject within subject positioning**

Engeström (1999, pp.28-29) purports to having overcome the conundrum of individual-collective through the notion of mediation, developed by Vygotsky (1978). Individual actions are socially mediated towards the object together with other members of the community that are working on the same object. Using the same reasoning, a collective subject is also an active agent with its own “aims interests, memory, and norms” (Engeström, 1999, pp.28-29). However, the individual and collective become interconnected through mediation as the individual mediates with other individuals through the questioning and redesigning of their object with the creation and use of collective cultural tools. As discussed in the section above not only is the individual merged into the collective but so is speech merged into material tools. This move from individual actions to collective actions is central to Engeström’s (1987) debate on how social development takes place. The problem with the reading presented by Engeström is that it focuses on collective production as the only way of tracking change and thereby loses sight of Vygotsky’s (1978) thesis where development occurs when an individual solves a problem with the aid of an abstract mediating artefact to create something new. Ignoring individual contributions in collective endeavours is tantamount to an assimilationist perspective found in integration models. That is to say that development can take place or cohesion can be realised only by means of a homogenous unified corpus. The articulation of a collective at the loss of the individual, warns Bateson (1972), runs the risk of provoking negative psychosocial consequences that ensue such as heightened communication breakdown, ruptures with self and loss of personal identity. I found myself therefore confronted with a conundrum that needed to be resolved as, if I analysed the data as a homogenous collective movement I would be accepting that assimilation policies of integration are justified at the loss of concepts such as those proposed by cosmopolitanism and human diversity.

Virkkunen and Virkki (forthcoming) maintain that a mediating artefact capable of overcoming a developmental contradiction contains both poles of that contradiction. An application of this reflection affords an analysis of the dynamics that took place within the Home-School Change Laboratory process at the personal level, and provides the possibility of conceiving Wendy’s

discursive actions as semiotic mediators that function at two levels and that contained both poles of the Home-School's developmental contradiction. Firstly, her verbal actions contributed to transform other participants' experiencing of what being an immigrant within their society is like. This experiencing partly led to the production of material actions such as new flyers, courses for facilitators and a new charter. The second implication was her personal psychic transformation of her personal historical perspective of being a foreigner and a national (see Figure 5 below). In other words the analysis is richer as it works on a double axe, personal to collective and back again. It therefore includes the creation of new joint activities and new ways of working as well as networks of collaboration and by selectively focusing on individual contributions, it retains development at the personal level. Wendy's emotional discussions with Thomas were not material actions but semiotic sense making actions that mediate between her, Thomas and the other participants' personal and collective psychic and material worlds. Negating subject positioning, articulated through the discursive dynamics of Thomas and Wendy would therefore represent a serious misreading of the internal mechanism that was found within the Home-School Change Laboratory sessions. Furthermore, such a reading would ignore the different life worlds of people such as Wendy. Instead it would merge her developmental shifts into that of the wider population. In order to justify my analytical position demonstrated within chapter 4 and in my argument here, I present a rereading of the articles proposed by Engeström (1987) as constituting the foundations for the Cultural Historical Activity Theory and provision for the analysis of Change Laboratory data, those of Vygotsky, Leontiev and Bateson.

Vygotsky (1934/ 1997) purported that the structure of language is not a simple reflection, a mirror of thought. And furthermore that language cannot simply re-clothe thought as a robe or dress. A subject, through the transformation of his or her speech inevitably modifies thought. It is a dialectical relation in which the real signification of the word is not constant and continually transforms as the individual attempts to make sense of his or her environment. The constant re-signification of a word, as its representative of human actions and objects in the context, becomes stripped of its complexity and gives rise to categorisations at the individual and collective levels of society. In this sense thought modifies language and language modifies thought and so political ideologies are pronounced within national laws and practices and confirmed in people's speech and actions on an everyday basis.

Furthermore, Vygotsky proposed that the research on development required introducing a neutral artefact within the pupil's Zone of Proximal Development. As I argued above, Vygotsky was, in his claim, stating that each person has a different way of engaging with his or her problem solving despite the problem and artefact being culturally constituted. Most importantly, Vygotsky (1998) claimed that *perezhivanie* has an individual meaning making space where cognition and emotion are dynamically inter-related. *Perezhivanie* is what constitutes the relationship between individual and environment (semiotic and material world). He wrote that psychology "ought to be able to find the relationship which exists between the child and its environment, the child's emotional experience [*perezhivanie*]" (p. 341). It is *perezhivanie* that contains the properties that are characteristic of the whole and through which units of analysis are given. Due to the central role of experiencing within the construction of meaning making, it makes sense to study development from the emotional experiences of the subjects and not only from that of the produced outcome. Vygotsky did not deal with adult learning and his theory of the Zone of Proximal Development contains the child's biological development and the possibility that the environment affords to that development. Relying on the works of Leontiev (1987), Engeström (1987) transferred this concept of the Zone of Proximal Development and stated that within a developing activity this zone needs to be understood as being "the distance between the present everyday actions of the individuals and the historically new form of the societal activity that can be collectively generated as a solution of the double bind potentially embedded in the everyday actions" (p.174). This statement is misleading as it infers that all individuals participating within a Change Laboratory are at the same level in relation to the activities object, however, this was not the case in the Home-School Change Laboratory or in the case of the Molefi Change Laboratory (see Virkkunen, Newnham, Nleya & Engeström, 2012). Wendy's personal life experiences of the world, being a person with a refugee residential permit and living in Switzerland from birth could not be the same as that of a person who has a national genealogy of several generations. Moreover, Victoria or Steven's everyday activities meant that their conceptions of immigrant mothers and children were to begin with more expansive and empathetic than, for example, retired teachers that had dealt with homogenous national pupils and their parents. Thomas's involvement as head of a special education unit reinforced his socio-cultural beliefs that immigrant mothers and their children did not make an effort to adapt to the mainstream societies' cultural ways of being as the remedial lessons were represented by an overpopulation of immigrant children. Therefore these individuals' Zones of Proximal



Development were not the same. However, in my understanding of Engeström's (1987) premises, through the sessions of the Change Laboratory the participants are all required to overcome their individual positions and redesign a new activity that manifests a common point, object and motive. This infers that some participants would have to make a great leap forward whereas others would not develop much at all. However, this did not happen in the Home-School Change Laboratory, Thomas and Wendy held different final positions toward the object due to their initial or emerging leading activities (Leontiev, 1978).

Engeström (1978) argues that Leontiev developed the notion of collective activity as being the only unit of analysis possible in human development, however, Leontiev in his text, *'Activity, consciousness and personality'* (1978) made use of the personal indicator *his* and proclaimed that the individual functions at three different levels within his or her individual activity. These levels are not all discernible to the individual, he stated that, as operations are automatised applications of past learned experiences having lost their initial sense. His second level is that of individual actions and the third the level of activity. He purports that in order to understand individual development, and not collective development, "we (should) go further and investigate development as a process of 'self movement', that is, investigate its internal moving relations, contradictions, and mutual transitions so that its prerequisites appear in it as its own changing moments" (Leontiev, 1978, chapter 5). Furthermore it requires "an analysis of the object activity of the subject, always, of course, mediated by processes of consciousness, which 'stitch together' the separate activities" of his life world. It is the leading activity of the individual that is the key to the door but his development is realised by the "aggregate of his multifaceted activities". In other words the development of an individual's personality occurs during his or her active participation with the object of his or her leading activity but his or her personality is not defined by that leading activity but by the aggregate of all the activities of his or her historical life world. Although, in retrospect, the act of categorising people is the tendency to define people by their leading activity at a given moment in time.

Leontiev (1978) was referring to a study of personality development that is socially constructed where the social is represented by the activity that fulfils societal and personal needs. He wrote that "(h)ere we have in mind especially the activities of the subject that are original 'units' of psychological analysis of personality, and not actions, not operations, not

psycho physiological functions or blocks of these functions; the latter characterise activity and not personality directly” (chapter 5). Therefore studying personal actions within one activity is not a way of understanding the personality or sense making of an individual. The way to understand sense making is by interpreting the relations between the individual subject’s personal activity systems that are aroused (drawn to the surface) within the discussions and although “at first glance this position seems contradictory to the empirical representations of personality and, moreover, seems to impoverish them. Nonetheless, it alone discloses the way to understanding personality in its true psychological concreteness” (chapter 5). The example which Leontiev deploys to illustrate his argument is not that of a group of individuals but of an individual, Gogol:

“was serving in some department as a functionary copying official papers, and he saw in this operation the whole diverse and fascinating world. Finishing work, Akaki Akikievich immediately went home. As soon as he ate, he took out an inkwell and began to copy papers that he had brought home with him, and if there were notes to be copied, he made copies for himself, as recreation, for his personal satisfaction. ‘Having written to his heart’s content,’ Gogol tells us, ‘he went to sleep smiling in anticipation of the next day: whatever God would send to be copied tomorrow.’”

Leontiev (chapter 5) then states that within the analysis of Gogol’s shift:

“we do not know the concrete circumstances, but in one way or another, these circumstances led to this: that there occurred a displacement of one of the main motives for what are usually completely indifferent operations, which were turned into an independent activity because of this, and in this form they appeared as characterising personality” and that, “what seems from the outside to be actions that have their own meaning for man are disclosed by psychological analysis to be something else, and specifically that they are only means of achieving goals, the real motive of which lies as if in a completely different plane of life. In this case, behind the appearance of one activity there hides another activity” (chapter 5).

My understanding of the reading of Leontiev’s arguments is that personal sense making is not open to interrogation without taking the interconnecting activities and their objects, toward which he or she directs his or her actions, into consideration. Furthermore, it is in the

reconfiguration of present activities, relying upon skills consciously acquired in the past but now unconsciously executed, which constitutes his personality. Transformation relies on historical personal and collective experiences. Nowhere does he speak of a conglomerate, a collective subject as articulated by Engeström. Rather he wrote that it is impossible to arrive at an understanding of individual development (structure of personality) by “starting from a collection of separate psychological or social-psychological features of man as the real basis for human personality”. Personality “lies not in genetic programs deposited in him, nor in the depths of his natural disposition and inclinations, nor even in the habits, knowledge, and wisdom acquired by him, including professional learning, but in that system of activities that is realised through this knowledge and wisdom” (chapter 5). He therein argues that it is not by abstracting the person from his context that his personality can be understood or by identifying fragmented elements of his activities but rather within his network of social activities. Furthermore, the development and multiplication of an individual’s types of activity do not lead simply to an expansion of their “catalogue.” Simultaneously, there occurs a centring of them around several major activities to which the others are subordinated. This complex and long process of development of personality has its stages and its stops and is mediated by the individual’s consciousness.

The driving force behind the choice of the constellation of the activities is found in the relationships of the individual’s motives and needs. This means that a group of individuals working on a common project might at certain moments of its development and actualisation be distracted by other more pressing needs and the project activity becomes subordinate and conflicting which was the case at a certain moment within the Home-School project when Thomas felt the need to acquire a diploma based on his participation in the project. “Thus we come to the necessity of turning to an analysis of motives and considering their development, their transformation, the potential for splitting their function, and such of their displacements as take place within the system of processes that form the life of an individual as a personality” (chapter 5). However, the individual has a need but not necessarily an understanding of his or her object that can satisfy that need. As the person “begins to act there immediately occurs its transformation, and need stops being that which it was virtually, *in itself*. Through an identification of the object required to fulfil the need, need becomes replaced by motive. For example, Wendy needed to belong to the mainstream society in order to overcome feelings of alienation. She found an object, integrating immigrant mothers. This

initially placed her in a position of siding with the mainstream society and their acceptance provided a motive for her to alienate her family and other immigrant groups as being part of her personal activity systems. Her choice was motivated by the emotional energy produced by her interpretation of being excluded. Elaborating on Vygotsky's (1978) work on emotions and experiencing, Leontiev (1987) argues that motives as objects are not recognised by the individual and are not separate from consciousness; they find psychic reflection in the "emotional intensity, its mark and its qualitative character". Emotions only give energy to the individuals needs but do not give it sense; sense is engendered by social motives and in the individual's selection of the object motive. There are two types of motives; those that induce activity and give it personal sense (sense forming motives) and those that are based on stimulating factors, sometimes sharply emotional and affective (motives-stimuli). A shift in the individual's motive source can lead to a shift in the activity which complicates the analysis of the individual's development due to the "hidden nature of his or her converging and emerging relations of activities" (chapter 5).

In the case of the immigrant people, the choice of adopting a leading activity at any given time is not arbitrary, Du Bois, argues Hale (2008), maintains that there are three socially constructed options open to a subaltern: the first is an *ethnist model* which describes the subaltern as being defined by two conflicting essences, that of the birth culture and that of the mainstream culture. The second is a *colonial model* where cultural identity is rather an internalisation and acceptance of the social position dictated by those vested in social power. Within these two possibilities the subaltern unconsciously hides his or her internal identity behind a "veil" (p. 448). The necessity to create this 'veil' provides him or her with a double consciousness. When the split between belonging to the two activities becomes emotionally untenable the subaltern recognises his or her hidden voice and "thwarting the racism" (p. 448) that reduces the subaltern to imposed social categorisations, in this case of residential permits, he or she transcends space and recognises his birth life world and his imposed life world as being irreconcilable and creates a third possibility through entering into Bateson's (1972) third level of logic, a hybrid space.

Wendy began her participation within the project adopting the position of being a national. However the confrontations with Thomas as he articulated his sense making of the stimuli provided provoked her to make sense of her position and to reorganise the vertical compilation

of her activity systems. In a struggle to make sense of the stimuli motive and her emotions, she juggled with belonging. At times her 'home activity' was at the fore and aft was that of belonging to the mainstream society until finally she reconstructed a new activity composed of selected characteristics of both life worlds. She became double voiced (Bakhtin, 1986) a hybrid (Hale, 2008). However, her debate with her psychic self and the ways that she interpreted this in material action was not an individual process, Victoria and Steven were sensibly questioned and this movement of questioning, debate and remediation led to personal and group creativity.

Leontiev (1987) however argued that the individual does not necessarily change their leading activity or reconfigure the constellation of their activity systems, when encountering a negative emotional stimulus the individual can choose to discredit the motive stimuli. I presume this is what happened in Thomas's case. He discredited the emotional stimuli provided by the mirror data and the participants' verbal actions maintaining his initial position as head of the special education unit and a national. Sense-formed motives acquire a higher place in the individual's personality however; their dominance, although apparent to the individual, may remain 'in the wings' (chapter 5) with respect to both 'consciousness and direct effectiveness' (chapter 5). On the other hand Bateson (1972) argues that stereotypes are at the level of logic 0 and as Thomas was articulating societal constructions of stereotypes of immigrant mothers and their children he was benchmarked with a learning level 0. However, his resistance was none the less a communicative stimulus to Wendy and the other participants and a contribution to the other participants developmental shifts.

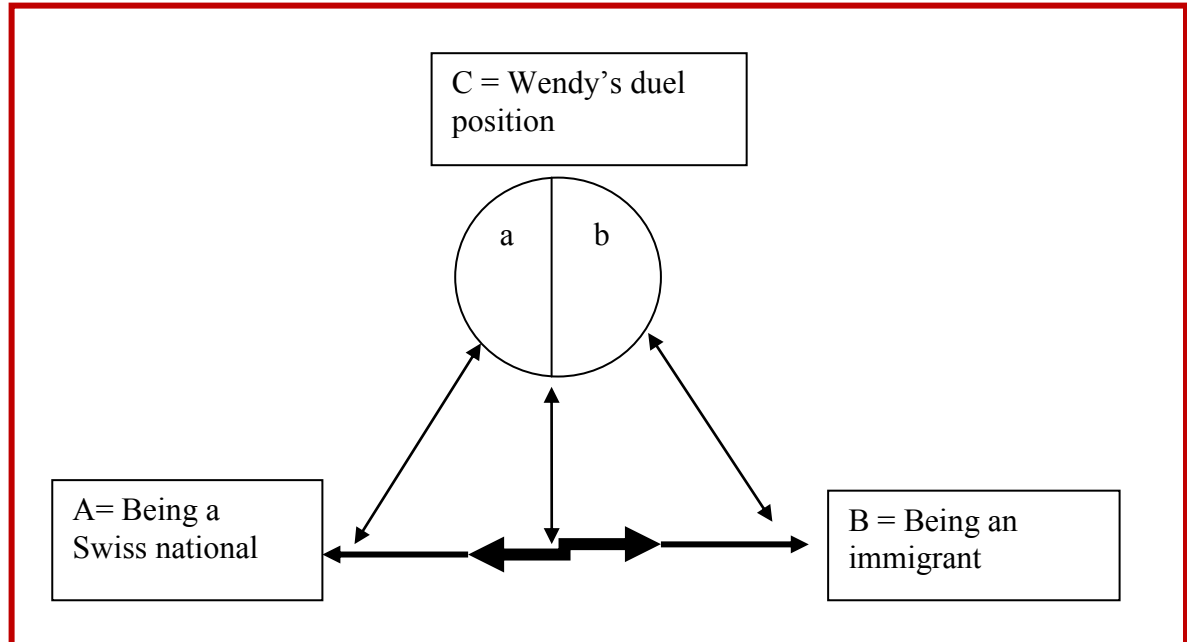
In Engeström's (1987) reading of Leontiev, it is argued that development can only be studied through the individual's transformation of their common object and it is the movement of the object and not the repositioning of the subject which provides the window of analysis. The individual subjects of an activity become assimilated into the activity object losing, in the process, their individuality and significance. Engeström's (1987, 1991) articulation of Vygotsky's concept of human development is strongly influenced by the works of Leontiev. The problem with this reading is that it "merely talks about an activity system, not about social organisations and formations and Leontiev's (1987) combination of social theory and psychology remains too abstract and is only rudimentarily and inconsistently developed" (Axel, 2001, p. 140). "Leontiev's theory of activity is meant to grasp individual development

as socially produced... a central assumption with which to accomplish this is the conception of how needs and interests have determining and indispensable functions in producing knowledge through practice. Objective knowledge can be realised not by abstracting from, but by taking into account the contradictory class interests which are embedded in them” (Axel, 2001, p.140).

Overcoming these inadequacies requires putting discursive actions back into the picture through the incorporation of Vygotsky’s semiotic actions as this reading affords the possibility of conceiving individuals as dynamic agentive diverse human beings who may perform towards a common purpose but, contrary to the perspective offered by Engeström (1987), do not become in the doing a homogenous indefinable whole. Rather, the society is there as a conflicting source, a constant reminder of his or her position. Personal contradiction may come to the fore as the individual attempts to align his or her leading activity with that of the society giving way to experiencing a double bind, stimulating a strong effect and at this moment he or she has to deal with this emotion either in a way of realigning the ordering of his or her activity systems or by discarding the emotional stimulus and finding an original way of being. For example Thomas should have been pleased that trust was developing between the different participants, however, he was the founder of the project and a leader in his specialisation. He was used to telling others what to do and not to share his position of power. His anger demonstrated his personal double bind of, on the one hand, needing the project to be successful and, on the other, maintaining his position of power. In Leontiev’s words, if he mentally sorted out the proceedings of the sessions, specific moments would surface in his memory, as a given experience and through his recognition of the source of his discomfort, his mood would acquire the objective reference that lead to his feelings of unpleasant emotional residue. At this level of logic 2 (Bateson, 1972) Thomas could transcend the actual space (level 3) and reorganise his activity systems. In other words, an effective signal would guide him to finding the cause of his double bind, his problem of personal sense and provide a displacement of one activity or another in order to find equilibrium. Sense making motives take place vertically whereas emotion or effect stimuli motives lie on a horizontal plain in the subject’s configuration of activities. Sense making motives are constructed, I claim, by ascending to Bateson’s (1972) third level of logic. However, Vasilyuk (1992) argued that during certain critical life moments the individual can lack resources to accomplish

transcending and therefore requires guidance such as is provided within the Change Laboratory devised by Engeström (1987).

In conclusion, such a reading provides the possibility of an analysis of the individual's social construction defending the position that an individual subject cannot be dissolved into the system of collective activity as the individual is a "specific system of its own" and needs to be perceived as having attributes of free will and can refuse to adhere to certain societal and cultural rules and norms and create others of his or her own (Lektorsky, 2009, p.80), despite at the same time being part of the smaller and wider whole. Perhaps Engeström's reading was motivated by the analyses of learning in the workplace, where learning is seen as "ideas of participation in community practices" (Edwards, 2005, p. 49) and where work places provide a constricted environment. None-the-less it is difficult to generalise human development to one activity when Leontiev (1987) purported that individuals are the aggregate of their multiple activities. The study of human development, creativity and sense making has only become more complex due to communication devices and transport. This thesis argues that individuals make important and different contributions to the transforming object and in themselves contain dual positions (see Figure 5.1 below).



*Figure 5.1 A mediating artefact that comprises in itself the polar aspects of the contradiction and unites the opposites (Virkkunen & Virkki, forthcoming)*

In his reading of Vygotsky through Leontiev, "Engeström presents a challenge to researchers who are looking at teaching and learning and how it might be enhanced" at an organisational

level, however, “he pays relatively little attention to the individual as someone coming to know or making sense” (Edwards, 2005, p.61). Relying more on the Vygotskian legacy provides a possibility where each individual functioning in a particular activity can be seen as providing secondary and primary stimuli to each other in an agentive re-orchestration of their activity. Wendy’s discursive actions during her repositioning acted as a mediating artefact as her leading activity of ‘*climbing out of her skin*’ to become part of the mainstream society contained the opposing poles of the mainstream societies developmental contradictions (see figure 5.1 above).

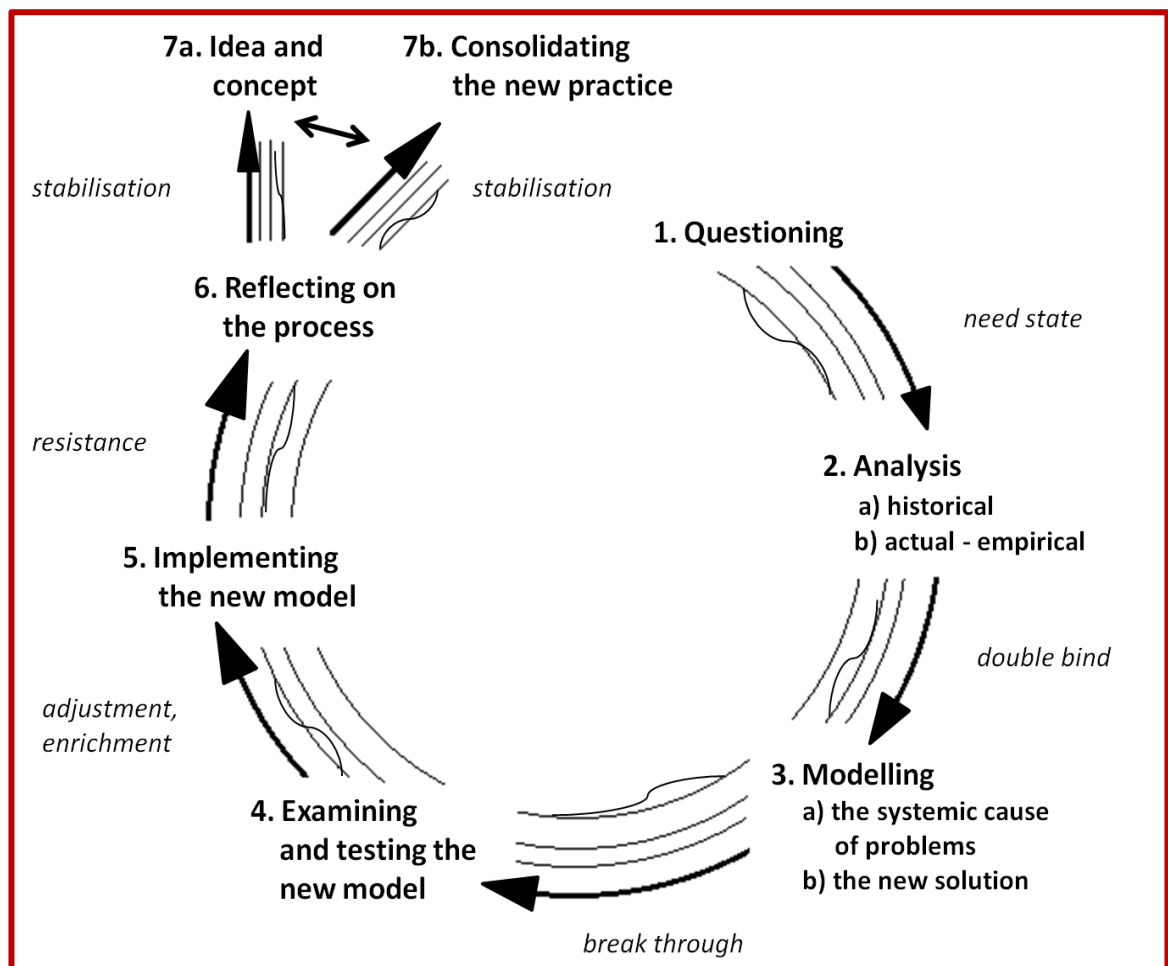


Figure 5.2 Cycle & Expanding individual – collective concepts and actions

An analysis of development at the individual-collective level affords a far richer insight into the dynamic interplay between the subjects and how this stimulates development and creativity. It appears unfortunate to miss such an opportunity. In order to do this I have reworked Engeström’s (1987) expansive learning cycle (see Figure 5.2 above). In this expansive movement speech has a double role in human activity and development, that of



mediator and of creator of human actions (Wells, 2007). This process needs to be perceived as being continuously interactive.

Figure 5.2 differentiates between semiotic and material tools and between conceptual and material outcomes. Besides being an adaptation of Engeström's expansive cycle the model drew on some thoughts proposed by Dewey (see Miettinen, 2009).

This model breaks away from that proposed by Engeström (1987; 1999) which portrays the subject as an undefined whole and all stages of expansion are part of this indefinable whole. The outcome is material and human development in its psychic capacity is not identified. Engeström (1999) claimed that:

“The expansive cycle of an activity system begins with an almost exclusive emphasis on internalization, on socialization and training the novices to become competent members of the activity as it is routinely carried out. Creative externalization occurs first in the form of discrete individual innovations. As the disruptions and contradictions of the activity become more demanding, internalization increasingly takes the form of critical self-reflection – and externalization, a search for solutions increases. Externalization reaches its peak when a new model for the activity is designed and implemented. As the new model stabilizes itself, internalization of its inherent ways and means again becomes the dominant form of learning and development” (pp.33-34).

The extract above is problematic in several ways. It appears that internalization and externalization are separate entities. In the Figure 5.2 above concepts, which are mental tools and material actions influence each other continuously. The participants were not novices in their learning process but adult human beings with years of social and cultural learning experiences. If they are novices then the interventionist requires being seen as an *all-enlightened* and I do not believe that this is the case otherwise the intervention would once more be top-down. Within the Home-School Change Laboratory the transformation of concepts of immigrant mothers and their children was the focus of attention however, material manifestations were as well part of the process. Moreover, the model proposed above identifies individual development as being part of the group but at the same time being definable (thinner lines in the middle). Individual differences are illustrated with the use of a

wavy line. Individuals do not share the same history, while one person may be a mother and have to contend with her work activity at the same time, another might be a single male and his work activity remains his leading activity most of the time. These two people enter into a work group with different perceptions of how they are prepared to proceed. This does not imply that they cannot come to a common understanding of what their object is and how they are to go about working together but it is quite evident in most of the Change Laboratories carried out by Engeström et al. that there are important differences between the participants' contributions.

In the model above the object can be the transformations of concepts and ideals. In order to perceive this as development the possibility of concepts, and going beyond concepts, needs to be interpreted. In this thesis the concepts were represented by integration models and were rated on Bateson's (1972) forms of logic form 0 to 3. The rating of concepts enables an analysis of semiotic actions towards a common object, in this case the integration of immigrant mothers. Despite there being material consequences of these shifting concepts the psychic concepts articulated semiotically were of significant importance. Without these transformations Wendy would only be perceived as being part of group that changed a charter to include mothers as part of a working group. The important reconceptualisation of self would be lost.

#### **5.4 Contributions, outcome and future challenges**

Benhabib (2004) wrote that "the Cosmopolitan theory of justice cannot be restricted to schemes of just distribution on a global scale, but must also incorporate a vision of membership. Such just membership entails: recognising the moral claim of refugees and asylums to first admittance, a regime of porous borders for immigrants; an injunction against denationalisation and the loss of citizenship rights; and the vindication of the right of every human being 'to have rights', "that is, to be a legal person, entitled to certain inalienable rights, regardless of the status of their political membership. The status of alienage ought not to denude one of fundamental rights. ... Permanent alienage is not only incompatible with a liberal-democratic understanding of human community; it is also a violation of fundamental human rights. The right to political membership must be accommodated by practices that are non-discriminatory in scope, transparent in formulation and execution, and justifiable when violated by the states and other state-like organs. The doctrine of state sovereignty, which has

so far shielded naturalisation, citizenship, and denationalisation decisions from scrutiny by international as well as constitutional courts, must be challenged” (pp. 3-4). Moving from a historical, socially accepted way of perceiving immigrants as being troublesome and non-participative requires important forms of cognitive and behavioural change. Such radical forms of change incur critical conflicts which paralyse individuals and therefore require intervention (Vasilyuk, 1988).

The learning space provided by a Change Laboratory process is not the only space where change is possible. Change does naturally take place over time; however, it should rather be understood as representing a compressed version of the mechanisms of change that are facilitated to take place within and between activities. As I have already explained within chapter three of this thesis, the Change Laboratory was devised by Yrjö Engeström (1987) in order to academically provoke and study change while it was happening. In the case of this thesis the intervention that took place intended to facilitate a socio-cognitive shift of the participants historically constructed conceptions and perceptions of immigrant mothers and their children. I argued in chapter 1 that conceptions and perceptions are dialectically constructed as individuals in a society make sense of socio-political models and everyday events. Socio-political models are often translated into stereotypes of others and used in everyday life as tools for sense making, in this case of who belongs to the concept of *us*. The construction of these perceptions relies upon human experiences (Vygotsky, 1994) of individual's life worlds (Vasilyuk, 1991) that confirm their premises. An illustration of this is found in Steven's discussion on how the national people had suffered since the Second World War and how this in turn raised feelings of aggression against foreigners who were said to be stealing what is rightfully theirs. Steven, in that discussion, is however voicing his perception of people living in the canton. As Vygotsky (1994) argued, although we are collective human beings the same objective situation may be “interpreted, perceived, experienced or lived through” (Mahn, 2003) in different ways by each individual. The general reticence to and belief of foreigners, as demonstrated within the introduction of this thesis, permeated all social institutions such as education and led to the national acceptance of an assimilation model as being the only one that was possible in their situation. However, the population's need for foreign and cheap labour as well as international relations created a central developmental contradiction which was being expressed in social institutions dealing with foreigners, the participants of which were experiencing increasing levels of tensions.

The Change Laboratory proposed to find a solution to the manifestation of this contradiction within the Home-School project by moving the participants' conceptions towards one that was more empathetic, expansive and illustrative of, for example the Alternation model proposed by Laframboise, Coleman and Gerton (1993), by means of which individuals recognise each other as being beneficial and non antagonistic. As argued by Appiah (2006) the important thing is that the relationship of foreigners and nationals should be one where everyone is perceived as being part of the same family with different needs and ways of expressing them and the resources and products should be shared. Perhaps this is a little idealistic as a proposition but placing this as an outcome to which everyone should work might be a way to begin. I have demonstrated in the analysis above that the Change Laboratory methodology is applicable within a voluntary organisation and that it does facilitate expansive learning and development of the shift in the conceptions of others, but that despite individuals sharing a common object they do not necessarily share exactly the same perceptions and conceptions of their object due to their different historical experiences.

This type of analysis is important whilst intervening in voluntary organisations or within subaltern groups of people. Wendy, after completion of the project, decided to study further and to build another voluntary group that invited migrant and refugee mothers to discuss their joys and sorrows with the aim of finding a new way to navigate within their actual life world. Wendy remarked that she had lost ten kilos in her mind due to her new way of perceiving herself and her life: *'I just know that I do not need to be one or the other I am simply me (silence) different that is all'*. Victoria, together with several other special education teachers, decided to always include the mothers in their remedial education programs and to heed their advice. The Home-School project continued by building trust between the different partners and invited immigrant parents to attend the workshops in order to present themselves and discuss everyday events, needs, joys and problems and in this way they began the process of 'getting to know you'.

The results attest to, and suggest that, Change Laboratory methodology can be used in many more situations where people are suffering on an everyday basis if the transformations proposed by this study are heeded. Social welfare institutions often lose their energy when confronted with people that they believe have lost their reason to live and as Vasilyuk (1992)

demonstrated, in *'the Psychology of experiencing. The resolution of life's critical situations'*, some people get to a point where they just do not know how to make sense of their lives anymore and need new practical and psychological tools in order to construct a new life world. I argue that this methodology and the proposed analysis of individual development within an activity of sense making is useful for intervening in the life worlds of displaced women, divorced women and women that have suffered from physical and mental violence. Bearing in mind the problems that arose within the paradigms of experiential learning proposed by Kolb (Miettinen, 2009), this thesis proposes maintaining the premises and tools afforded by interventionists in the Change Laboratory sessions but proposes an analysis that is based on the Vygotskian legacy, to include the transformation of the material object of the activity and that of subject positioning through semiotic actions. The proposition retains the use of accumulated knowledge and experience, "insight into the communities, community programmes as well as conditions and possibilities of various actions" (Miettinen 2009, p.151) and adds the need to investigate personal experiencing as being both empirical and theoretical, "(e)xperience is not a rigid and closed thing; it is vital and hence growing. When dominated by the past, by custom and routine, it is often opposed to the reasonable, the thoughtful. But experience also includes the reflection that sets us free from the limiting influence of sense, appetite, and tradition" (Vygotsky, 1933/ 1989, Vol 8, p.277).

In this way this study makes a contribution to adult development and to concepts of integration in our contemporary world. Furthermore, it makes a contribution to the Cultural Historical Activity theory and the analysis of the data that arises out of its Change Laboratory methodology. I shall elaborate on the contributions of this study in the conclusion as well as presenting my research questions once more and the outcome of this study.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

The Home-School Change Laboratory took place in a region in Switzerland. Immigrant populations in Switzerland are categorised by different residential permits that regulate their access to social institutions and zones of habitation. The ramifications of the residential permits permeate all social institutions and ways of life. The residential permits are translated into various degrees of exclusion by the mainstream population such as parental abilities to raise their children and to pursue their education. The project holders in their project proposition defined immigrant mothers and their children as being problematic and as the

source of teachers' distress. However, their conundrum is that Switzerland relies on cheap foreign labour and international coalition in order to maintain its population's high standard of living. The conundrum was the source of an experienced contradiction within the Home-School project due to a proclamation that they needed to integrate immigrant mothers in order, they argue, to improve on their children's school performance. The mothers' opinions were never asked and it was presumed that the difficulties that their children had at school were due to their presumed lack of participation within the wider society. There were many unknown factors at the basis of the project and these were supplemented by theoretical readings. The result of these readings and social discourse were laid down in a document that claimed that: immigrant parents carry their previous world with them, unable to let go; women lack education and due to this their children have difficulty socialising in school; being born into an immigrant home means being in a home where education and revenue are limited; children derivative of *de-favourised* social classes perform less well at school; the Home-School project will be able to re-qualify the mother as a responsible parent and help the mothers to fix and maintain limits with their children.

Gutiérrez et al. (2005/ 2008) argue that a study of the daily classroom environment reveals who gets to study what, the scripts and dialogue that are carried out and the roles of power and other dynamics that reflect the wider society. The possibility that the problem with the children was not only in the home but also in the way that immigrants in general, and mothers and their children in particular, were perceived and the selective behaviour that these perceptions guided were never initially questioned.

As argued in chapter 1 of this thesis, categorising is fundamental to human existence. It penetrates every context of collective social action and individual reasoning. "We simply cannot describe, reflect on, or deal with reality without invoking categories and, thus indirectly, systems and traditions of categorisation by means of which we render events and objects intelligible" (Säljö and Hjörne, p.153). If taken as truth then education is a vital "constituent of the vision itself, in virtue of the role it plays in the acquisition of the second nature essential to our community with the world and with other minded beings" (Bakhurst, 2011, p.66) as it is "through others that we become ourselves" (Vygotsky, 1997, p.105) and through the destruction of others that we destroy ourselves.

Abstract thinking relies on abstractions of things out there in the world, and involves taking one isolated observable event or feature and interpreting “a complex integral object as its homogenous instantiation” (Virkkunen, Newnham, Nleya & Engeström, 2012, p.3). In the case presented by this thesis, immigrant mothers in general and refugee mothers in particular were perceived as people for whom the tax payers’ money is used and not as being loving caring mothers that have lost their family network, friends, economic situation, home and society and who, due to their experiences, could have something original and necessary to contribute to the Swiss societies. Abstract thinking is based on empirical generalisations and colours peoples’ intentions, thoughts and acts (Virkkunen et al., 2012). Such abstractions fence reality off from thinking providing only the fixed and stabilised concept in the consciousness instead of advancing more elaborated reflections on the identified object (Ilyenkov, 1977).

In the process of learning, the reproduction of stereotypes or categorisations demonstrates *zero learning* (Bateson, 1973, p.282) as found, I argue, in the political application of ethnist models of integration. Assimilation models of integration require the immigrants to give up their values, norms and beliefs and take on those of the *host society*. I correlated this level of learning with Bateson’s next level of learning, learning 1, which infers that the learner changes specificity of response by correction of errors of choice within a set of alternatives. Immigrants that accept this form on integration do not question the system but assimilate the ways of behaving as laid down by the nation state (Berry, 2012). The next level of learning, learning 2, is one in which choices are made but always within the sequence of given possibilities. However, besides immigrants’ evaluation of their present situation in comparison to that lived previously, they have difficulty discerning between the apparent good will of the nationals and the *hidden curriculum* (Tosey, 2005). Pluralist societies cling to national sovereignty despite adhering to an international society of states and are therefore not equated to a cosmopolitan society where sovereignty is downplayed in favour of an emergent world community (Ramsbotham & Woodhouse, 2011). However, the consequences of this model are more positive than that of assimilation. Immigrants and nationals share positive interaction and knowledge of the other is more heightened. The psychological experiencing of double binds is common here and is resolved by going beyond words and of practical transformation. Learning two then resembles learning manifest in pluralist societies. The final level of learning is learning 3 and is achieved by few (Bateson, 1973). It is a level of logic that requires

transcending the here and now of finding new communal forms of being such as those found in Buddhist societies. This level of learning is the most astute relying of dialectical and meta-reflection. Cosmopolitanism is an ideology and not an integration model. But I hypothesise that it is one in which people would truly be able to transcend the here and now and work towards an emergent world community organised (Appiah, 2006) around the notion of justice and the welfare of all. It recognises that we have an obligation to each other and that there is an interconnectivity of all creatures in the cosmos. The thesis does not claim that all populations within a nation state are conditioned by the overarching political ethos (Bakhurst et al., 1995) but rather that it has insidious repercussions on learning that permeate all levels of a society. In Figure 4.3 of this thesis the backdrop indicates that people embody and act upon variations of political models of integration depending on their life experiences (Vygotsky, 1934/ 1987) and their network of activities (Leontiev, 1987).

Drawing on the works of Hegel and Marx, Engeström (2007b) suggests that knowledge and concepts should be characterised on the basis of their uses. Forms of integration depend on categorisations of human differences explained on the basis of race, ethnicity, cultures and more, several of which have been established as a solution to the former. These categorisations serve to define *who is in* and *who is out* and include rules, beliefs, values, social and environmental spaces and economic resources. Engeström (2007b) refers to the opposite of stabilised knowledge (abstract knowledge), as *possibility knowledge*. Possibility knowledge emerges when objects are represented in fields with the help of which one can depict meanings in movement and transformation. Possibility knowledge is based on and supports dialectical thinking, that is to say, the analysis of real functional relationships of interaction between objects and phenomena in their historical development.

The research questions that guided the work laid out in this thesis were as follows: can the categorisations of immigrant mothers developed by the members of the two groups within their social and political surroundings change to include a more empathetic and expansive position towards the mothers (Tolman, 1981)? In other words are the participants able to break away from abstract categorisations to include concrete, elaborated conceptions of immigrant mothers and their children? The findings of this thesis affirm that it is possible if the data traces collective development and ignores individual development and secondly if the outcome is defined as material production. This is however a misreading as Thomas did not



change to a more empathetic and expansive form of thinking of the mothers and their children and Wendy went beyond national self. Steven and Victoria, on the other hand, transcended perceiving immigrant mothers and their children in deficit terms but still relied on national boundaries. A recognition of these differences is an important contribution to adult learning. This leads me to my second question as it is only by answering the second that I can answer the first.

The second question dealt with a defined weakness of Developmental Work Research (see Edwards & D'Arcy, 2004; Miettinen, 2005; Daniels, 2005; Roth & Lee, 2008; Engeström, 2009 and Lektorsky, 2009), that is found within Engeström's (1987, 1999) actual non-articulation of subject positioning and concepts of self as outcomes of development. My need to posit the question, "is it possible to articulate subject positioning within the Cultural Historical Activity Theoretical framework", is due to the growing number of immigrant people across our planet and the increasing societal contradictions with which they are confronted on a daily basis. The Change Laboratory Methodology is a powerful tool for intervening in societal change, however the lack of an articulation on individual development makes it difficult to use when dealing with people that are suppressed and powerless. The answer to my question is that, as it stands, the premises on which the Cultural Historical Activity Theory resides need to be rearticulated in order to include individual diversity and concepts as semiotic tools and outcomes of production.

The *new* necessitates a rejection of the *old* in its holistic form. In the case of the Home-School Change Laboratory I was an insider as I was invited to be part of the project but I was an outsider, as was Wendy, as I represented, to the Swiss nationals, the group of foreigners. The simple fact that I discuss such positioning is in itself a confirmation of its existence. Our lives have become increasingly complicated and international laws constructed to protect immigrant population, and in particular forced emigration, are not always ratified at the national level and even so are reinterpreted to align with internal socio political requirements. Living prejudicial behaviour everyday is tiring, unfortunate and requires a reconstruction of self in order to survive. Wendy chose to align with the mainstream population but during the Change Laboratory sessions she became increasingly aware of the source of her personal double bind and in the end chose a new option. Her new position of neither here nor there but somewhere *beyond the veil* reflects the possibilities afforded by concepts such as cosmopolitanism

(Appiah, 2005, 2006; Cole, 1998). Her struggle to overcome her own personal double bind made me reflect on my position within the same society. I had also chosen to be neither one nor the other, a hybrid. However, my perspective was reinforced during my personal experiencing of the events that took place within the Change Laboratory process. In this way it is not only that the participants change their activity and their perception of their world but the interventionist as well. The discourse held during the sessions acted as a powerful natural secondary stimulus which questioned the participant's perceptions of immigrant mothers and their children's school performance.

Integration models, if any should exist, should be as tolerant as possible when it comes to non-harmful cultural behaviour and expansive in its positions of social movements and rights. Cultures could be understood as "not being about groups of people... Rather, the focus should be on the implicit and explicit patterns of meanings, practices, and artefacts distributed throughout the contexts in which people participate, and on how people are engaged,... or changed" (Markus & Hamedani, 2007, p.11). The less that diverse populations are hindered in their reconstruction of self and life world, the sooner they will be able to contribute to collectively building a stronger and more harmonious community in which their contribution to design, pool and share socio-cultural tools is equal to all. Any other proposition gives way to various antagonistic forms of behaviour on behalf of the mainstream society as with that of the immigrants. Within a society it is often at the level of voluntary social organisations that malfunctioning dynamics induced by malfeasant integration policies find their articulation, amongst well intentioned people. This research demonstrated the possibility of overcoming historically created categorisations of immigrant mothers and their children to produce one that is more concrete, empathic and expansive, and which demonstrates a learning level 3 in Bateson's (1972) levels of logic.

Whilst, "Vygotsky stood for a highly humanistic vision of man as a person, moved by the energy of free choice and self-development in interaction with" others, "Leontiev stood for the vision of a person as a product of Soviet social relations and reality ... his was mostly a behavioural theory" (Koshmanova, 2007, pp.75-77). The interpretation provided in this thesis argues for an articulation of individual-collective development that is to say of diversity within the subject as a recognized stimulus. Concept development through discursive actions needs to be accepted as an outcome. This shift opens the door to an analysis of subject positioning, a

vital contribution to understanding individual-collective forms of producing creativity and, in this study, the reconstruction of national self.

The neglect contained within Engeström's model of Developmental Work Research and its inherent weakness (Miettinen, 2005; Stetsenko, 2005; Langemeyer, 2006 & Engeström, 2009) was addressed and a new way of reading the texts that constitute the theoretical foundation of Cultural Historical Activity Theory was proposed in defence of the analysis that was carried out in Chapter 4. The analysis demonstrated that participants of a Change Laboratory project do not share the same personal historical network of activity systems and that this lead to ruptures, conflicts, critical conflicts and dilemmas as they negotiate the contradictions of their expanding activity systems. I argued that these personal differences and the discursive actions and their resolutions provide a very rich lens through which individual reconstruction and development can be studied and that semiotic actions act as important natural stimuli. I argue that this form of analysis is important as, when people experienced subjugation in any form, neglect of their personal contribution would be unethical. Furthermore, such an analysis of how subjects are positioned and how they position themselves in relation to the social context of their discourse offers an explanation of hybridity (Daniels, 2006) and attests to a cosmopolitanism vision of the world (Apphia, 2005, 2006).

Change of historical conceptions of others to one that is more expansive is necessary and possible. Operations, habit and categorisations require no reflection and are the "great flywheel of society. It is necessary, in this society, to have stabilised ways of doing things that function well and in a predictable way in the recurring situations of life. On the other hand, the act of following these habits can turn into a conservative factor, an obstacle for change and innovation...Experimental and theoretical thought liberates us from intellectual laziness and from the tyranny of tradition" (Miettinen, 2009, p.163).

The limits of this study are that Wendy was a one-off case and so it is not possible to generalise and further studies need to be carried out amongst people that are subjugated. Many new propositions have been made within this study and therefore need to be tested further for validity. Furthermore, I was already well known in the area for my reflections on integration models and my defence of migrant and refugee women and their children. I was therefore not a neutral stimulus.

The Change Laboratory methodology used in this study was able to encourage expansive learning amongst some of the participants and to facilitate the transformation of historically created concepts of others. Once the project holders had come to the conclusion that their position towards migrant and refugee mothers had been historically constructed, their questioning began. One participant stated *'we used to dislike the Italians when they came to build our roads but now they are less of a problem and it is now the people from Serbia that are a problem'*. The positions of the different groups collectively stabilized as they shifted towards a more empathetic and inclusive position of the mothers. In order to elaborate their object they created new tools and rules of their activities. Immigrant mothers are now invited into the workshops, held once a month, to share their social and cultural experiences, the voluntary facilitators are required to undergo a cultural training workshop and a structure was put into place to enable a systematic monitoring of the dyads progress and problems that emerge along the way. The structure is a network information loop between the project holders, the voluntary integration organization, the school teachers of the children involved in the project and the facilitators. Difficult cases are discussed at monthly workshops and solutions collectively proposed.

As stated in the section above, this thesis makes a contribution to adult education; of human development in a social-political and cultural world, to concepts of integration and to Cultural Historical Activity theory and its inherent weakness, subject positioning. Relying on the use of these contributions I appeal for more empathetic and expansive political forms of perceiving and dealing with immigrant populations and in particular immigrant mothers and their children internationally, nationally and socially. Whereas Marxist philosophy and scholars such as Gramsci (1992) saw the resolution of the conflict of social classes as being in a bottom up movement of change, Freire (1970, 2004) stated that "no pedagogy which is truly liberating can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunates and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption" (1970, p.54) and that the oppressors must also be willing to change the social, cultural and political customs of their lives, to constantly re-evaluate their social positions and roles of power (2004, p.15). Furthermore, he argued that politics is intricately interwoven in all social and formal education and requires a constant battle of remaking of self in order to retain psychological freedom (Freire, 2004; Appiah, 2006). The

intervention research carried out for this thesis focused on the possibility of facilitating such transformations of both the oppressed and the oppressors.

As the society in which this study took place is historically strongly hegemonic, such transformations needed to be undertaken with caution in order to preserve everyone's wellbeing. Socio-political positions are a way of life and Dewey (1991) purported that "the strictly physical environment is so incorporated in a cultural environment that our interactions with the former, the problems that arise with the reference to it, and our ways of dealing with these problems, are profoundly affected by the incorporation of the physical environment" (p.49).

The area in which this study took place is in the heart of the Swiss Alps. People live in villages cut off from other villages by sheer cliffs of rock, rivers and, in winter, snow. Making sense of one's world, in Dewey's words arises out of dealing with such physical situations. It produces both psychological and material artefacts such as laws, rules and who belongs and who does not. None-the-less, the world of today through digital communication and transport is able to override material boundaries (Hakkaranien, Lonka & Paavola, 2004) to produce people that are hybridised, who go beyond mere collaboration and historical forms of interacting (Pirkkalainen, Kaatrakoski & Engeström, 2005). Taking these concepts into account and the suggestions proposed by Freire (1970, 2004), it appears that it is possible to move from adhering to the belief that one belongs to the perfect worldview (Gramsci, 1992) as found within the political concept of assimilation (Berry, 2012) to one of reducing boundaries in the belief that all human beings should be free to choose their ways of making sense of their world (Appiah, 2005; 2006).

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## APPENDICES

- 1) **Appendix 1:** Ethical approval form of the University of Bath.
- 2) **Appendix 2:** Form for participants' commitment to participate in the Home School Change Laboratory process.
- 3) **Appendix 3:** Participants consent and approval of the dates and times of intervention sessions.
- 4) **Appendix 4:** Mothers' consent to participate in my research.
- 5) **Appendix 5:** Planning for each Change Laboratory session (an example).
- 6) **Appendix 6:** Survey questionnaire of values and behaviour that ex-patriots and migrant labour parents wish to retain in Switzerland.
- 7) **Appendix 7:** Sessions 2 to 9. Analysis of discursive actions.

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**Appendix 1. Ethical approval form: University of Bath**

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**University of Bath**  
**Department of Education**

**MPHIL OR PHD PROGRAMME: ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF PROPOSED RESEARCH**

**To be completed by the student and supervisor(s) and approved by the Director of Studies**

**before any data collection takes place.**

**Introduction**

1. Name(s) of researcher(s)

Denise Shelley Newnham

2. Provisional title of your research

Changing the concept of an object in a voluntary organisation.

3. Justification of Research

The participants of the project within which I intervened were undergoing a double bind which was expressed verbally and was non productive to the project overall. I asked to intervene and to record the proceedings for my research. They accepted and signed their consent.

**Consent**

4. Who are the main participants in your research (interviewees, respondents, raconteurs and so forth)?

The project holders (N= 10), the facilitators and the 10 voluntary, mostly retired, educators (N= 10).

5. How will you find and contact these participants?

They are part of a project in which I have acted as a voluntary facilitator in the mother -child dyads for the past year.

6. How will you obtain consent? From whom?

I held a meeting with the participants and stakeholders and asked for their commitment to my research intervention and it was accepted. Next, I will ask permission from the head of the educational department and the mothers and children. I will explain my research and give them a form to sign.

**Deception**

7. How will you present the purpose of your research? Do you foresee any problems including presenting yourself as the researcher?

I am an immigrant and a student researcher and this could be a problem, or at least a confounding variable, but I believe that I have enough experience to overcome the dilemmas that arise as well as having lived long enough within the socio-political system to understand and interpret their social messages.

8. In what ways might your research cause harm (physical or psychological distress or discomfort) to yourself or others? What will you do to minimise this?

The methodology that I utilise is sufficiently agentive and expansive in its concept to side step this problem, however, conflicts are supposed to arise and I shall hold discussions with the participants that appear distressed in order to ensure their wellbeing. All participants have the right to withdraw.

### **Confidentiality**

9. What measures are in place to safeguard the identity of participants and locations?

All names of the participants are masked as well as the precise area in which the study took place. It is impossible to mask the country in which the research took place as it is a socio-political transformation study.

### **Accuracy**

10. How will you record information faithfully and accurately?

The data relies on ethnographic video and voice recordings which will be transcribed and verified at a later date. The Change Laboratory sessions are video recorded, transcribed and verified at a later date.

11. At what stages of your research, and in what ways will participants be involved?

The participants will be involved all the way through the empirical section which consists of 10 months.

12. Have you considered how to share your findings with participants and how to thank them for their participation?

The participants were able to give their opinion on the research proceedings at all times as the empirical section was based on a Change Laboratory methodology which is an agentive transformation of the participants activity. The key stakeholders were also invited to read the final manuscript and to make comments.

### **Additional Information**

13. Have you approached any other body or organisation for permission to conduct this research?

The department of education and the principles of the schools, the teachers, the mothers, the children, the doctors and the social workers were all contacted and asked for permission if necessary to record and interview different persons.



14. Who will supervise this research?

Professor Harry Daniels

15. Any other relevant information.

I believe that to the maximum of my ability I applied the rules of ethics to my research as I certainly would not like to cause harm to any individual through my endeavours. I have studied ethics in research for my Honours degree in Anthropology and so have always attempted to apply these guidelines, as well as those set by the University of Bath to the best of my ability.

<b>Student:</b> <b>069008407</b>	<b>Signature: Denise Shelley Newnham</b> <b>Date: 9.09.2006</b>
<b>Supervising Member(s) of Staff:</b>	<b>Signature(s):</b>    <b>Date:</b>
<b>Director of Studies</b>	<b>Signature:</b>  <b>Date:</b>

*A copy of this form to be placed in [1] the student file, and [2] an Ethics Approval File held by the Director of Studies. The Director of Studies will report annually to the Department's Research Students Committee (white paper business) on ethical issues of particular interest that have been raised during the year.*

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**Appendix 2.** Participants' consent to collaborate in the Home-School Change Laboratory process

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- 1) The participants of the Home-School project (project holders and facilitators) agree to be sincerely collaborative within the Change Laboratory sessions.
- 2) They agree to attend all the sessions and to invest in what has been learned and set up as homework.
- 2) They have been fully informed as a to the nature and demands of the project.
- 4) They agree to cooperate with the interventionist –researcher.
- 5) The interventionist researcher will ensure their anonymity as much as is possible from members of political and social institutions as well as from the wider public. No images of the project will be used without their permission. Names of any individual: teachers, mothers, children, project holders or facilitators will not be divulged and neither that of the area in which the project took place.
- 6) All data is shared among the participants of the project for discussion.

I the undersigned agree to the above terms:

**Participant's signature, name, date and place.** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Researcher's signature, name, date and place.** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Appendix 3.** Participants' consent of dates and times of the Change Laboratory sessions.
 

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PRELIMINARY PLANNING OF THE CHANGE LABORATORY SESSIONS AND THE WORKSHOP		
DATE	LEARNING ACTIVITY (CL)	WORKSHOP (PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITY)
10.10. 2006	16-18.30PM (1)	
16.11.2006		16-18.30PM (1)
12.12.2006	16-18.30PM (2)	
19-12-2006		16-18.30PM (2)
22.01.2006	16.30-18.30PM (3)	
25.01.2007		16.30-18.30PM (3)
8.02.2007	16.30-18-30PM (4)	
13.02.2007		16.30-18.30PM (4)
20.03.2007	16.00-18.00PM (5)	
27.03.2007		16.30-18.00PM (5)
19.04.2007	16.30-18-30PM (6)	
23.04.2007		16.30-18.30PM (6)
30.04.2007	16.30-18-30 (7)	
2.05.2007		16.30-18.00PM (7)
14.05.2007	16.30-18-30PM (8)	
15.05.2007		16.30-18.30PM (8)
24.05.2007	16.30-18-30 (9)	
4.06.2007		16.30-18.30PM (9)
13.06.2007	16.30-18-30 (10)	
13.06.2007		16.30-18.30PM (10)

Participant's Signature: .....

Researcher's Signature: .....

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**Appendix 4.** Mothers' consent to participate in the Home-School research projet

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- 1) I.....agree to participate in the Home-School project.
- 2) I agree that I have been fully informed as to the nature and demands of the project with the aid of a translator.
- 3) I agree to cooperate with the interventionist –researcher.
- 4) The interventionist researcher will ensure my anonymity and protection as well as that of the members of my family as much as is possible from members of political and social institutions as well as from the wider public. No images of the project will be used without their permission.
- 5) I am allowed to ask permission to read or to have read to me and with the help of a translator, any information or data concerning the project.
- 6) I have the right to withdraw from participating in the project at any time
- 7) I the undersigned agree to the above terms:

Participant's signature, name, date and place. \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's signature, name, date and place. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Appendix 5.** Planning outline for each CL session

<u>TO DO</u> LIST FOR PREPARATION .....SESSION N° .....		
THE PURPOSE OF THE SESSION IN THE CYCLE OF EXPANSIVE LEARNING		
TIME    min	THEMES AND TASKS	TOOLS (1 AND 2 STIMULUS)
<div style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 100px; border-left: 1px solid black; position: relative;"> <span style="position: absolute; bottom: 0; left: 0; right: 0; margin: 0 auto; width: 0; height: 0; border-left: 5px solid transparent; border-right: 5px solid transparent; border-bottom: 10px solid black;"></span> </div> <div style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 100px; border-left: 1px solid black; position: relative;"> <span style="position: absolute; bottom: 0; left: 0; right: 0; margin: 0 auto; width: 0; height: 0; border-left: 5px solid transparent; border-right: 5px solid transparent; border-bottom: 10px solid black;"></span> </div>	<div style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 100px; border-left: 1px solid black; position: relative;"> <span style="position: absolute; bottom: 0; left: 0; right: 0; margin: 0 auto; width: 0; height: 0; border-left: 5px solid transparent; border-right: 5px solid transparent; border-bottom: 10px solid black;"></span> </div>	
PARTICIPANTS' TASKS FOR THE NEXT SESSION:  RESEARCHER-INTERVENTIONIST REMARKS:		

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**Appendix 6.** Survey questionnaire of values and behaviour that ex-patriots and migrant labour parents wish to retain in Switzerland.

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Acculturation or Enculturation: Migrant parents' cognitive and behavioural transmission<sup>1</sup>

Dear research participants, colleagues and friends,

When immigrants of all kinds leave their home country and, more specifically, their area of habitation they transport with them cultural traits in the form of material articles as well as beliefs and behaviour. The question that I am interested in is which of these traits are still of importance to you while living in (Name withheld).

All information given below will remain strictly confidential.

**Preliminary questions**

1. Name (optional): .....
2. Age: ..... years old
3. Do you have children?                      Yes        ☐                      No        ☐
3. If yes, please indicate number of children: .....
4. Age of your children
  - a) ..... years old
  - b) ..... years old
  - c) ..... years old
  - d) ..... years old
  - e) ..... years old
5. Country of origin: .....
6. Which other countries have you lived in: .....

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<sup>1</sup> Copyright, Denise Newnham, 2006

7. Which country have you lived in for the longest time?

8. In which country/ies were your children born?

a).....

b).....

c).....

d).....

e).....

9. How much education have you completed by now?

I never attended school ☐

Primary school ☐

Secondary school ☐

High school ☐

College ☐

Others ☐

10. If you could further your education would you like to?

Yes ☐ No ☐

11. What would you like to learn?

a) To read and write French Yes ☐ No ☐

b) Do basic maths and keep household accounts Yes ☐ No ☐

c) Learn a trade Yes ☐ No ☐

d) Higher studies and which? Yes ☐ No ☐

12. Are you employed? Yes ☐ No ☐

13. On average how many hours per week do you work?

14. What is your household's approximate level of income?

15. If you do not work is this a source  
of frustration for you?

Yes

☐

No

☐

### **Enculturation/ Acculturation questionnaire**

1. If you have children: Do you have a particular phrase that you say to your children?  
Ex. 'the early bird catches the first worm'.

2. Where did you learn this dictum from?

3. What are your religious practices/ affiliation?

4. Do you practice your religion regularly?

Yes

☐

No

☐

5. If you have children: Do you transmit your beliefs to your children?

Yes

☐

No

☐

5a) If **yes**, where does this take place?

- Festivals

Yes

☐

No

☐

- Food

Yes

☐

No

☐

6. Do you cook food considered to come from the country that you were raised in?

Yes

☐

No

☐



6a) If yes, do you purchase a special food from a shop from your country of origin?

Yes ☐ No ☐

7. Do you listen to music? Yes ☐ No ☐

8. What language is the music in?

9. Do you prefer to dress in clothes similar to those from your country of origin?

Yes ☐ No ☐

10. What cultural traits (behaviours) remain the most important in your education for your children?

11. Do you consider the way your family lives to be Swiss French or to be closer to your original country?

Swiss French ☐ Original country ☐

12. Would you like to become more Swiss?

Yes ☐ No ☐

13. If you have children would you like your children to become more Swiss in their ways?

Yes ☐ No ☐

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP

If you would like to contact me: please call (number with held)

**Appendix 7.** Discursive actions analysis sessions 2-9

<b>Session 2</b>	Manifestation	Features	Linguistic cues
Turn 55	Conflict	rejection	No I said that (no I disagree)
Turn 69	Conflict	exclaiming	Whew (no I disagree)
Turn 84	Conflict	rejection	Well that is what we are supposed (no I disagree)
Turn 85	Conflict	arguing	That is not what was agreed (no I disagree)
Turn 89	Conflict	arguing	Well I don't think (no I disagree)
Turn 96	Conflict	rejection	So I said that we cannot (no I disagree)
Turn 105	Conflict	alternative	I don't think that this is the problem (no I disagree)
Turn 113	Critical conflict (after first mirror)	guilty	Oh that is the reality (moral accounts)
Turn 114	Critical conflict	side stepping	This has nothing to do with us (moral accounts)

<b>Session 3</b>	Manifestation	Features	Linguistic cues
Turn 166	Conflict	rejection	No we do not have time (no I disagree)
Turn 170	Conflict resolution	questioning self	I did not think of that (acceptance)
Turn 175	Conflict	rejection	Honestly they are not my concern (no I disagree)
Turn 189	Critical Conflict resolution	alternative	Actually there are a lot of our mothers that (finding a compromise)
Turn 236	Critical Conflict resolution	alternative	No they seem to be well rounded (finding a compromise)

<b>Session 4</b>	<b>Manifestation</b>	<b>Features</b>	<b>Linguistic cues</b>
Turn 319	Double bind	relating	Her story .... (helplessness)
Turn 322	Double bind	confusion	What should we (we have to)
Turn 323	Double bind resolution	empathy	Well we cannot actually (we have to) but how
Turn 325	Dilemma	confusion	What is our role (yes but)
Turn 329	Dilemma resolution	guttural acknowledgment	Hmmm uhhh (but on the other hand)
Turn 332	Double bind	confusion	We have to be careful
Turn 333	Conflict	alternative	They are quick to turn this around (no I disagree)
Turn 336	Critical conflict	Narrating-crack	It is a bomb (personal emotional moral accounts)
Turn 340	Critical conflict	aligning	10 years refugee (moral account)
Turn 342	Conflict	rejection	No real problem (no I disagree)
Turn 343	Dilemma	alternative	I never saw it from this (on the other hand)
Turn 347	Critical conflict	despair	Oh no I don't know how (personal emotional)
Turn 348	Conflict	rejection	Dramatic account (this is not true)

<b>Session 4</b>	<b>Manifestation</b>	<b>Features</b>	<b>Linguistic cues</b>
Turn 350	Critical conflict	disgust	Turn the other way (moral accounts)
Turn 352	Critical conflict	rejection	Climbing out of my skin (contradictory motives)
Turn 365	Dilemma	crack	I think that it is fairly accurate (I did not mean that)
Turn 370	Conflict	rejection	Taken too far (this is not true)

<b>Session 5</b>	<b>Manifestation</b>	<b>Features</b>	<b>Linguistic cues</b>
Turn 381	Double bind	confusion	We are really a bit lost (helplessness)
Turn 383	Critical conflict resolution	exclaiming	A conflict of social experiencing (contradictory motives)
Turn 385	Conflict resolution	awareness	Don't really know about (yes this I can accept)
Turn 403	Conflict resolution	awareness	Yes that is true
Turn 411	Conflict resolution	awareness	Perhaps a lack of psychology (that is true)
Turn 413	Conflict resolution	aligning	The way forward (that is true)
Turn 416	Conflict resolution	alternative	We need to rethink (yes that is true)
Turn 413	Conflict	rejection	I disagree
Turn 415	Conflict	expression of disgust	Really sometimes (not true)
Turn 448	Critical conflict	awareness	The Matterhorn (vivid metaphors)

Session 6	Manifestation	Features	Linguistic cues
Turn 460	Double bind	confusion	We have too much (helplessness)
Turn 461	Critical conflict resolution	exclaiming	Should not let them get on top (contradictory motives)
Turn 470	Dilemma	confusion	If they don't see it like us (on the one hand)
Turn 473	Conflict	rejection	No change (disagree)
Turn 478	Conflict resolution	awareness	Our parents are a problem (that is true)
Turn 483	Conflict resolution	aligning	Our kids are spoilt brats (that is true)
Turn 486	Conflict resolution	alternative	Negative feelings must change (yes that is true)
Turn 488	Critical conflict resolution	awareness	Mothers as a positive contribution (finding new sense)
Turn 493	Critical conflict resolution	awareness	Need to rework our way of (practical and new meaning)
Turn 498	Double bind resolution	suggestions	We shall find a new shape to it (practical transformation)

<b>Session 7</b>	Manifestation	Features	Linguistic cues
Turn 515	Critical conflict	admitting	I feel so embarrassed (feeling guilty)
Turn 520	Conflict	rejection	They don't work (disagree)
Turn 523	Conflict	sarcasm	They are better off (disagree)
Turn 527	Conflict	rejection	Don't need them (disagree)
Turn 533	Critical conflict resolution	despair	My parents suffer from the system (violated)
Turn 536	Double bind resolution	aligning	We can find a new solution (we have to do)

<b>Session 8</b>	Manifestation	Features	Linguistic cues
Turn 668	Critical conflict	appealing	How am I to take this (violated)
Turn 670	Dilemma resolution	aggression	Enough of all the moaning I didn't (denial)
Turn 672	Critical conflict	anger	Did you fall on your head (violated)

Session 9	Manifestation	Features	Linguistic cues
Turn 683	Critical conflict resolution	positioning	I am tired of this useless (new personal sense)
Turn 685	Conflict	rejection	I don't agree with you
Turn 686	Critical conflict resolution	positioning	Oh yes we are meant to be (new personal sense)
Turn 689	Critical conflict	authority	I think that you are overstepping (contradictory motives)
Turn 690	Critical conflict resolution	positioning	Ah so my place is back in (violated)
Turn 693	Conflict resolution	aligning	Me too I agree
Turn 694	Conflict resolution	aligning	That is true